

PRESENT-TRAUMATIC STRESS



MARTIN KUZ/Special to Stars and Stripes

Pfc. Durell Siverand, left, and Pfc. Alex Valdivia, mortuary affairs specialists with the 54th Quartermaster Company, prepare a flag that will cover a transfer case carrying the remains of a U.S. soldier from Bagram Air Field in Afghanistan to Dover Air Force Base in Delaware.

Death detachment

Transporting the fallen, fighting to keep emotions in check

BY MARTIN KUZ

Special to Stars and Stripes

TBAGRAM, Afghanistan
he first body was the most difficult. Pfc. Durell Siverand found a family portrait in the dead soldier's wallet that showed him posing with his wife and two daughters. A mortar blast had killed him on the day he turned 21.

Siverand, one year older, had landed in Afghanistan less than three weeks earlier with the 54th Quartermaster Company of the 82nd Sustainment Brigade. The mortuary affairs unit occupies a large metal hangar at Bagram Air Field, some

40 miles north of Kabul. In this space, where a small wall sign reads "Dignity Reverence Respect," death controls the order of life.

Siverand and Pfc. Alex Valdivia belong to one of the company's two teams of mortuary affairs specialists. As the "dirty hands" crew of their eight-member team, they prepare the bodies of fallen troops for the final flight home.

Before deploying, Siverand worked in a morgue for a short time, and after arriving at Bagram last summer, he spent several days observing the unit that the 54th replaced. He was nervous but ready on the morning of his initial 24-hour shift.

By evening, after delivering the private's remains to a cargo plane, he felt unmoored.

Standing outside the hangar, he smoked three cigarettes in 20 minutes, his first three since deploying. His mind fixed on the soldier's family photo. He wondered whether he could last here.

"This is not something that everyone can do," said Siverand, of League City, Texas, recounting the episode some weeks later. "I won't lie — sometimes it's very hard for us, too. But you know that you've got to get these heroes back to their loved ones as fast as you can."

SEE MORTALITY ON PAGE 4

About this series

Stars and Stripes is looking at the mental health of U.S. soldiers in Afghanistan and how they cope with the war's internal burden while deployed. This series is produced with the support of a Rosalynn Carter Fellowship for Mental Health Journalism.

Read more from this series at stripes.com/go/pts

US destroyer prepares for first ballistic missile patrol

BY STEVEN BEARDSLEY
Stars and Stripes

ROTA, Spain—The fanfare of its arrival has passed, and the USS Donald Cook is preparing to make its first patrol in support of Europe's ballistic missile defense patrol sometime in the next month.

On a quiet, holiday morning when most of his sailors were away, Cmdr. Scott A. Jones, commanding officer of the Arleigh Burke-class destroyer now anchored at this Navy base in south-

The USS Donald Cook, along with three other U.S. destroyers, will form the centerpiece of Europe's Phased Adaptive Approach program.

ern Spain, spoke about the Cook's mission and the recent move from Norfolk to Rota, where the crew was welcomed last week by Spanish and U.S. dignitaries, including Navy Secretary Ray Mabus.

"I've got a million and one business cards," Jones said. "I'm Rota's latest social butterfly, as I told my wife."

The Cook is the first of four American destroyers to move to Rota over the next two years, each equipped with the Aegis radar system and SM-3 missiles capable of intercepting medium-range ballistic missiles.

Together the ships will form the centerpiece of Europe's Phased Adaptive Approach program, a missile shield with radar in Turkey, a command element in Germany and ground-based interceptors in Romania and Poland.

Although the U.S. insists the system is meant to provide a defense against rogue states such as Iran, its development has caused a major rift with Russia, which says the shield is aimed against its own nuclear missile arsenal.

SEE DESTROYER ON PAGE 2

FACES

In its second week, 'Lego Movie' still dominates box office

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WORLD

In Sochi, Olympics security appears increasingly uneven

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OLYMPICS

Davis and White win first ice dancing gold medal for USA

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QUOTE OF THE DAY

"Out of a city of 8 million people, there cannot be only 37 women who are qualified enough and interested in being firefighters — that's just ridiculous."

— Sarinya Srisakul, president of the women's firefighters association, which has made boosting numbers in New York a priority

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COMING SOON

Science & Medicine

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EUROPE

Cook: Crew has spent past year preparing for move to Rota

FROM FRONT PAGE

Moscow has argued that Iran has no ballistic missiles capable of reaching Europe.

The pace of operations for each ship will be high, with a cycle of four months on patrol and four at pier. In addition to missile defense, the ships will perform tasks for the Navy's Sixth Fleet and NATO, from exercises to mission support and port calls.

The arrival of the ships coincides with increased U.S. interest in the Mediterranean and Africa, where an area of instability ranges from Syria down to Egypt and across much of northern Africa, parts of which have become havens for militant groups.

The Mediterranean also remains the gateway for U.S. deployments to the Middle East and the Persian Gulf, where operations in Afghanistan and tensions with Iran have led to increased tours by carrier groups and smaller craft.

Jones is awaiting the tasking for his first patrol. In the meantime, the ship is undergoing light maintenance, and crew leaders are focused on situating the Cook's roughly 300 sailors on the base and in town.

The Cook's crew has spent the past year preparing sailors and the ship for their new home in Rota, a base just north of Gibraltar on the Atlantic coast. They participated in a ballistic missile defense exercise off the East Coast, and in October they fired their SM-2 surface-to-air missiles to destroy a target drone. They also met with Rota base officials to talk about the move process, and they interviewed families.

A few crewmembers were forced to leave the ship. Single parents, families dependent on two incomes and some with chronic medical issues were among those weeded out, Jones said. He was able to swap some crewmembers by "deck-crossing" with other ships, or trading similarly qualified sailors.

About a dozen families have arrived in Spain so far, Jones said, with another 50 slated to come in the summer. Other sailors are ineligible to bring families because they will leave the ship within a year. The arrival of their replacements will bring even more families to the area, Jones said.

The ship's needs are generally



PHOTOS BY STEVEN BEARDSLEY/Stars and Stripes

The Arleigh Burke-class guided missile destroyer USS Donald Cook arrived at its new home station in Rota, Spain, last week.



Cmdr. Scott Jones, commanding officer of the USS Donald Cook, explains the weapons system terminals inside the ship's Combat Information Center.

light, Jones said, because of early planning and a broad push at the highest level to meet time lines for the shield.

"This transition has been so smooth because of the work done on both sides of the Atlantic to make this a success," he said. "The president tasked the Navy to do this, and the Navy made it happen."

Commissioned in 1998 and named for a Marine captured in Vietnam, the Donald Cook is a floating arsenal that boasts

the Navy's most advanced radar system.

Vertical launch systems at the fore and aft can fire SM-2 missiles, SM-3 interceptors and Tomahawk cruise missiles. A 5-inch gun at the front can provide indirect fire to support troops on land. The Harpoon missile system can target other ships.

At the heart of the Aegis system are four large radar sensors on each side of the ship, which are used to track and target aircraft and incoming missiles. Infor-

mation is fed into the Command Information Center below deck, where weapons systems are controlled and monitored.

Originally developed to defend against anti-ship missiles, the system was adapted for ballistic missile defense, in which targets are fired from extreme distances and sometimes leave earth's atmosphere as part of their trajectories.

"This is the most capable component of national missile defense," Jones said. "It is deployed around the world on station 24-7, 365, for a capability that was never originally conceived of."

The Sixth Fleet previously had one ship permanently stationed in its waters, the command ship Mount Whitney. The Cook's arrival — and the impending arrival of the three other ships — mark a leap in the Navy's organic capabilities in the Mediterranean and Atlantic, as well as its reach.

"Certainly, the Mediterranean will be our primary focus, since that's where we're best able to support the ballistic missile defense of Europe from," Jones said. "But, certainly, there's opportunity to go up into the Atlantic, up to the U.K., to the Baltic."

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MILITARY

USS Cole bombing hearing halted at Gitmo

By CAROL ROSENBERG
The Miami Herald

GUANTANAMO BAY NAVY BASE, Cuba — An Army judge abruptly recessed the first military commission session of the year Monday because the suspected architect of al-Qaida's 2000 USS Cole bombing may want to fire his lawyer.

One-time waterboarded Saudi prisoner Abd al Rahim al Nashiri, 49, is slated to face trial in September. The judge, Army Col. James L. Pohl, had scheduled eight days of hearings to address defense and prosecution representation questions, efforts by Nashiri's lawyers to narrow the case — as well as to postpone the trial until at least February 2015.

Nashiri's death-penalty defender, Rick Kammen, a civilian, told the judge moments into the hearing that the prisoner wanted to fire him. He asked for two days to work with the accused on preserving the relationship. Pohl agreed.

He recessed until Wednesday and said that if the hearings go forward, he'll hold Saturday and Sunday sessions to make up time. Nashiri, who could be executed if convicted as the mastermind of the suicide bombing of the \$1 billion warship off Yemen in October 2000, sat silently in the courtroom for the 10-minute hearing.

The case prosecutor, Navy Cmdr. Andrea Lockhart, asked the judge to question Nashiri directly on the issue. Pohl declined.

There was no immediate word from family members of the 17 American servicemen who died in the attack. They were brought to the base Sunday to watch the proceedings.

Parents of some of the slain sailors make the pilgrimage to this remote base in southeast Cuba for each hearing as guests of the prosecution, and have expressed anger at what they see as defense stalling tactics.

Defense lawyers say the death penalty and the secret nature of the proceedings have prolonged this phase. They also cite Nashiri's waterboarding and other "torture" in U.S. custody, which has left him suffering post-traumatic stress disorder.

Under military commission rules, an accused terrorist facing a possible death penalty must have a learned defense counsel on his team. Only Kammen currently qualifies in that role, although Nashiri also had three military defense lawyers at his defense table for Monday's hearing.

Two were new to the team — Navy Cmdr. Brian Mizer, who previously had defended Osama bin Laden's driver, Salim Hamdan, at a military commissions trial, and Army Maj. Tom Hurley, who previously had been part of Army Pfc. Chelsea Manning's court-martial defense team.

The United States captured Nashiri two years after the Cole attack. He was held in secret CIA custody overseas and was waterboarded and interrogated with

other now-banned techniques. President George W. Bush had him moved to Guantanamo for trial in September 2006.

Pretrial motions haggle over evidence and legal questions before a military jury is brought to hear the case.

On the eve of the hearings, the chief prosecutor, Army Brig.

Gen. Mark Martins, called the prolonged process "an indispensable part of this sharply adversarial process" and "necessary to the fair and open administration of justice."

Martins himself was expected to be at issue at Monday's hearing. Mysterious, recent legislation by Congress requires the Pentagon's

chief war crimes prosecutor to be of the same rank as the chief defense counsel. Martins outranks the chief defense counsel, Air Force Col. Karen Mayberry, a problem that could be remedied with a waiver from Secretary of Defense Chuck Hagel, according to a Pentagon spokesman, Army Lt. Col. Todd Breausseale.

Nashiri's lawyers, who frequently have complained that they are outgunned in resources, filed an emergency motion last week to freeze the proceedings to review Martins' status. It was still under seal at the war court while intelligence agents reviewed the motion's suitability for the public to read.

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MILITARY

Mortality: Though physically undemanding, their work exhausts the spirit

FROM FRONT PAGE

The Uniformed Services University reported in 2010 that one in five mortuary affairs specialists sent to Afghanistan or Iraq returned with symptoms of post-traumatic stress disorder. The rate parallels that of infantry soldiers and suggests the mental burden borne by those who handle the dead.

Barely into their 20s, immersed in the carnage of war, Siverand and Valdivia are weaned to fate's indifference.

"A lot of them are around my age," said Valdivia, 21, of Houston. "And you know they all have someone who loves them — a mom, a dad, maybe a wife and kids. And now they're gone."

Practiced urgency

The process starts when the phone rings. An officer tracking flights into the base calls the mortuary affairs unit with an alert that in 30 minutes to an hour an aircraft will touch down carrying a servicemember's remains.

The team in the hangar responds with practiced urgency. One member of the "clean hands" crew contacts the unit of the deceased to gather details for a case file that will travel with the body to the United States. Two members iron an American flag to drape over the top half of an aluminum transfer case that will hold the remains.

If their team receives the call, Siverand and Valdivia climb into a box truck parked in the mortuary compound and drive to the flight line. In their downtime, while playing "Call of Duty" or poker, a relaxed rapport flows between them. In the vehicle, silence prevails.

The two pull up close to the plane or helicopter. They enter the aircraft and salute the dead servicemember and the military escorts accompanying the remains. The escorts help load the black body bag into the back of the truck. The body rides feet first. Siverand and Valdivia salute again, close the door and return to the compound.

In the hangar, under the cold glow of fluorescent lights, they wheel the remains on a gurney and stop beside a steel table. They move to opposite sides of the bag's bottom end. Each pauses to steady his thoughts, to brace for a moment that never feels ordinary.

Valdivia unzips the bag. "I don't like doing it, so he does it," Siverand said. "But once it's open, you scan what's there and get to work."

They begin at the feet or the lowest point still attached to the torso. Wearing latex gloves, they probe for personal effects in boots, pockets, sleeves and fabric folds before checking beneath clothing.

Items removed from the body accumulate on the steel table. Another team member compiles a list for the case file: photos and letters, cellphone and wallet, dipping tobacco and cigarettes, battle bracelet and yellow ring. (The color of jewelry is described instead of assuming types of metal and gemstone.)

The two privates then slip the objects into a plastic bag that is tied to the body's left wrist. If the left arm is mutilated or severed, the next option is the right wrist, followed by a leg or the torso. Dog tags stay on the body. Weapons, ammunition and classified documents revert to military custody.

One of the men zips the bag closed. They place the remains in an ice-packed storage cooler until receiving word of the shipping time. They typically return to the flight line within two hours.

Before repacking the hangar, the pair lifts the body bag into the lower half of the transfer case. Biohazard bags filled with ice rest under the head and feet and across the chest to slow decomposition. Other team members attach the case's top half, already shrouded by the flag.

After a chaplain leads a prayer service, Siverand and Valdivia drive the body to



Above: Pfc. Stephanie Reyes, a mortuary affairs specialist with the 54th Quartermaster Company, takes a break inside the hangar at Bagram Air Field in Afghanistan, where the remains of U.S. soldiers are prepared for transfer to America. Right: Pfc. Alex Valdivia visits with Maj. Eden, a therapy dog, whose handler had stopped by the mortuary affairs "collection point."

PHOTOS BY MARTIN KUZ/Special to Stars and Stripes

the transport plane. A memorial ceremony takes place on the runway apron. Dozens of troops, sometimes hundreds, stand in columns that stretch straight back below either side of the plane's tail, creating a human corridor. Eight servicemembers carry the transfer case through the corridor and ascend the loading ramp.

Siverand and Valdivia trail them into the plane to perform a short ceremony that ends with a salute. They sign over custody of the remains to the flight crew. They walk out the front door and drive back to the hangar. They try to forget.

Stray details

Valdivia knows the dense, violent odor of the dead. He has seen bodies maimed beyond semblance to the human form by roadside bombs. His hands have passed over bones pulverized by mortar rounds.

None of those sensations troubles him as much as opening a body bag to find a soldier who appears unbroken, face in repose.

"It's harder when they're not really messed up because they look like an actual, live person," he said. "If they're jacked up... I just try to think of it as the person was never real, because after dealing with so many, it does become hard not to be affected."

The Army operates a second mortuary affairs "collection point" at Kandahar Air Field in southern Afghanistan. Every U.S. servicemember who dies in the country passes through Bagram or Kandahar en route to Dover Air Force Base in Delaware.

In the sequence of steps to repatriate remains, soldiers assigned to the collection points fulfill a duty at once vital and invisible. They gain perspective on the moral dimensions of a position that most of them, including Siverand and Valdivia, did not seek.

"We know what we do is important," said Staff Sgt. Charles Ellis, 48, of Brookhaven, Miss., who leads the company's two teams of mortuary affairs specialists. "We also know that what we do isn't about us.



There's something wrong if there's attention on us."

Mortuary affairs units deploy to Afghanistan for six months. (In 2012, the Army cut the length of tours for other active-duty units from 12 months to nine.) The short deployments reflect the military's awareness of the mental trauma that can afflict mortuary affairs specialists, who are repeatedly exposed to death despite seldom leaving their base.

Valdivia has opened more than 40 body bags. Stray details resurface. He remembers the soldier with the same first and last name as one of his friends in Houston. Another soldier carried a photo of his mother whose likeness reminded Valdivia of his own.

"You try not to associate with the person," he said, "but occasionally you notice something about them, and it hits you: This person isn't all that different from me."

Siverand and Valdivia mostly refrain from lingering over a soldier's personal effects. A sense of self-preservation guides them as much as respect for the dead.

Siverand learned the need for detachment while working on his first body, the private with a wallet photo of his wife and two daughters. Afterward, as he smoked outside the hangar, one of his superiors offered him solace and advice.

"I've been through this, and I know what it's like," the sergeant told him. "Don't per-

sonalize what you're seeing. Don't spend a lot of time looking at their effects. Just keep your mind on sending them home."

Yet there exists a natural desire to understand the life of a person who is met only in death. It is an impulse not easily subdued. "We're human — we're interested in people," Siverand said. "Sometimes you wish you could know what someone was like."

The job requires them to skim written materials for classified information. Valdivia recalled the letter he pulled from the sleeve pocket of a 21-year-old specialist killed in a mortar strike in eastern Afghanistan. He saw the note was from the soldier's father and told Siverand, who urged him to set it aside.

Valdivia instead read on, curiosity overriding his better judgment. He discovered that, after years of discord, the two men had recently reconciled. The father wrote of his pride for the son and his anticipation of their reunion in a few months.

The body lying on the gurney was no longer simply a name without a past. Valdivia felt a jolt of grief. The reunion would happen much sooner but for the worst reason. He wanted to unread the letter. He cannot escape the memory.

Helping to say goodbye

Siverand and Valdivia find relief in the limited diversions available to soldiers in Afghanistan. They watch movies and play video games on their laptops, lift weights at the gym, talk and text with family members in America. The respite provides separation from work that, if physically undemanding, can exhaust the spirit.

In addition to the remains of U.S. troops and civilian contractors, they receive the bodies of soldiers from nations supporting the U.S.-led war here. Along one wall of the mortuary hangar, the flags of Germany, Poland and other coalition countries hang side by side, forming a veil of solidarity.

The two share another duty known as vehicle clearance, cleaning out armored trucks in which soldiers have been killed. They extract "leftover" remains — teeth, bone fragments, bits of flesh — and wipe away dried blood after bodies are removed.

"You have to get your mind ready before you go in," Siverand said. "I try to think of it as going into a scary movie. That helps make what I'm about to see seem less real."

For the two friends, war has imposed clarity about the human condition. Handling the dead has instilled an awareness of life's brevity; observing the reactions of the living to the fallen has revealed how one person can inspire many.

Valdivia was the son of a 25-year-old sergeant killed in a mortar attack on Bagram Air Field last summer. Dozens of soldiers from his company appeared at the hangar for the prayer service. As they embraced and wept, Valdivia strained to stifle his emotions.

"I just want him and he still touched my heart," Valdivia said before his unit redeployed late last year. "You could easily tell he had a big influence on people, and that makes you consider how you can affect people and what you mean to them."

Similar thoughts occurred to Siverand. "I stood there wondering, 'What did this guy do as a soldier to make this many people care?' That's when you start saying, 'Hey, I want to be just like him.'"

Following the service, several soldiers hugged them in gratitude. In those moments, they realized the deeper purpose of their role: to ensure that the remains they guard against their own internal struggle.

"When you see the faces of the guys who know the victims," Siverand said, "that's when you understand the importance of the job. You're helping them say goodbye."

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NATION

It's no party as McConnell faces a tough primary

By CHARLES BABINGTON
The Associated Press

MADISONVILLE, Ky. — Democrats dream of driving U.S. Sen. Mitch McConnell into retirement this year, ridding President Barack Obama of one of his fiercest opponents. Tea partiers have the same dream, but they say the Senate's Republican leader actually is too accommodating to Democrats.

That left-right squeeze is forcing McConnell to scrape as hard as ever to raise money and try to extend his 30-year Senate career into a sixth term.

The squeeze also may be his salvation.

It obscures divisions among the critics who drive up McConnell's unpopularity ratings, often cited as his biggest problem. His Democratic critics can't vote in the May 20 Republican primary, when McConnell will hold an edge in name recognition and

money. If he survives the primary, his tea party detractors are unlikely to vote Democratic in the November general election.

As for less ideological voters, McConnell hopes his role in crafting major compromises with Democrats will burnish his can-do image among Kentuckians, many of whom register as Democrats but often vote Republican in federal elections.

"Farmers love Mitch McConnell," said 10-term U.S. Rep. Ed Whitfield, R-Ky., who introduced the senator at a recent coal-related event in snow-covered western Kentucky. "The coal industry is totally supportive of Mitch McConnell."

Some Kentuckians say McConnell's political strength in Washington, where he sometimes brokers deals with Democrats, could be his campaign weakness back home. Kentucky rejected Obama twice in landslides. Five of its six U.S. House members are



STEPHEN LANCE DENREE/AP

TIMOTHY D. EASLEY/AP

Left: Rep. Ed Whitfield, R-Ky., right, introduces Sen. Mitch McConnell at a campaign stop in Madisonville on Feb. 8. Right: Tea party candidate Matt Bevin is challenging McConnell in the GOP primary.

Republicans.

In an interview after the coal rally in Madisonville, about 150 miles southwest of Louisville, McConnell acknowledged the dilemma. Starting with the 2004 defeat of the Senate's Democratic leader, South Dakota's Tom Daschle, nationwide targeting of Senate leaders "is the new paradigm," McConnell said.

"That changed my life here," he said, noting that groups from the left and right spend millions to attack him on television.

McConnell cited his role in "four major deals" during Obama's presidency: a 2010 extension of the George W. Bush-era tax cuts; a mid-2011 bid to avert a government default and seek a spending-cut mechanism; the end-of-2012 "fiscal cliff" deal; and last fall's agreement to end a GOP-driven

government shutdown.

Tea party groups blast him for cutting such deals with Democrats. But, McConnell said, "If it's important for the country and there's enough grounds for agreement, I don't object to doing business with them."

On some issues, including the new health care law, McConnell fiercely opposes Obama. On others, such as immigration, McConnell fades into the background.

McConnell, who turns 72 on Thursday, was the undisputed king of Kentucky Republican politics until 2010. That's when Bowling Green ophthalmologist Rand Paul, son of libertarian hero Ron Paul, clobbered McConnell's hand-picked candidate in a GOP Senate primary. Ever since, McConnell has tried to placate tea party critics, even hiring Paul's

campaign manager for his own race.

Still, Louisville businessman Matt Bevin is challenging McConnell from the right. He is spending \$600,000 of his own money and drawing respectable sums from conservative groups and individuals. Bevin's intensity contrasts with McConnell's downy demeanor, and some Republicans say he's the fresh face to replace a three-decade Senate fixture. Bevin disdainfully criticized McConnell in an interview after a GOP dinner speech in Fishersville.

McConnell "crows about the fact that he's given 150 speeches on Obamacare," Bevin said. "If you're that cotton-picking powerful, really, you've given 150 speeches and didn't move the needle one iota?"

Another winter blast for Northeast

The Associated Press

BOSTON — The latest blast of snow to hit the far northeastern New England region dumped more than a foot in Massachusetts and packed heavy winds that left thousands without power along Cape Cod.

The weekend snowstorm follows an earlier storm that blanketed the East Coast with snow and ice, caused at least 25 deaths and left hundreds of thousands without power, just the latest in a long winter of storms.

Coastal areas in Maine and south of Boston appeared to get the worst of the storm overnight.



BILL SIKES/AP

Workers clear snow from the sidewalk outside a business in the Boston suburb of Hudson on Saturday.

In Massachusetts, 15 inches of snow was reported in some areas.

Wind gusts of more than 50 mph were reported Saturday night on Cape Cod, where utility NStar said fewer than 1,000 customers were without power

early Monday. Crews from Connecticut crossed into Massachusetts to help fix the power outages after more than 13,000 customers started the morning without power.

Some parts of Maine reported up to 17 inches of snow.

Father unable to save family after fiery crash

The Associated Press

FRESNO, Calif. — A central Californian man helplessly watched his wife and four young children perish in a fiery crash after trying unsuccessfully to rescue his family from the burning vehicle, authorities said Sunday.

The man was driving behind his family Saturday night when the driver of a minivan ran a stop sign at a Fresno County intersection and struck his wife and children in their Ford Expedition, California Highway Patrol Officer Axel Reyes said.

The SUV was thrown to the front lawn of a home and burst into flames, trapping inside the 29-year-old mother and her children, boys ages 1 and 3 and girls ages 6 and 11.

The father told officers he was driving about a quarter-mile behind his family and saw a flash

of flames. The SUV was already on fire when he reached them. He tried to free his family from the vehicle, including breaking the windows, and suffered minor burns to his hands in the process, Reyes said.

CHP Capt. Dave Paris told KSEE-TV that the mother also tried to escape but didn't make it. A couple who lived near the crash site said they had to pull the man from the burning SUV.

"He seemed to be so distraught; he was wanting to get his wife and children out of the car and my husband had to intervene because he was in such shock," Lori Pierce told KFSN-TV.

The minivan's driver, Juana Martinez Bejarano, 41, was being treated at a hospital for major injuries.

The CHP was investigating the crash.

Website Content Management Position Okinawa, Japan.

Deadline: 28 Feb 2014

A US government office on Okinawa offers an opportunity for a qualified applicant for open source coverage of Japan and China. The 32-hour-per-week position offers a good salary and benefits. The main areas of focus of this position are 1) producing visual products with an emphasis on graphics, video, and maps; 2) posting content to a robust and dynamic website, and 3) using technical tools for big data collection. The incumbent will be part of the Multimedia Unit that is comprised of US staff and locally hired Japanese staff which focuses on producing visual products on Japan, China, and the East Asia region. The incumbent will serve as website content manager. Moreover, s/he will track information flow from automated website collection tools. The successful applicant must have a strong interest in Social Media platforms including Facebook and Twitter, as well as Social Media tools. As a member of the Multimedia Unit, the incumbent will play a key role in tracking Social Media from Japanese and Chinese sources and help manage big data collection that results in

analytical reports. The incumbent will also edit translations and reports to ensure adherence to standards for style, grammar, and accuracy. Because of the office's operational mission and the need to coordinate with Washington-based Headquarters in real time, the incumbent will be required to do shift work including evenings, weekend, and holidays.

Qualifications

ESSENTIAL:
- Excellent written and verbal communication and editing skills.
- Demonstrated ability to use interpersonal skills and work collaboratively and effectively in a fast-paced, multicultural, dispersed team environment.
- Strong interest in Social Media and familiarity with platforms such as Facebook, Twitter, and blogs.
- Familiarity with web design, content management, and standard computer

applications such as Microsoft Office, Hypersnap, Adobe Acrobat, and other internet graphics tools.

- Ability and willingness to perform a wide variety of tasks, change focus quickly, and adapt work habits/schedule to meet mission requirements.

- Interest in Foreign Affairs especially in current Chinese and Japanese political/economic environments.

DESIRED:

- General proficiency in reading and understanding Mandarin Chinese or Japanese.
- IT skills including website design and computer programming, and familiarity with multimedia software.

- Familiarity with US military structure and culture.
Send cover letter, resume to ow_application@yahoo.com; only qualified applicants will be contacted.

NATION



ERIK SCHELZIG/AP

Workers walk by the Volkswagen AG plant in Chattanooga, Tenn., where a vote to unionize failed.

After UAW defeat, can GOP deliver?

By ERIK SCHELZIG
AND TOM KRISHER
The Associated Press

CHATTANOOGA, Tenn. — Republicans fighting a unionization effort at the Volkswagen plant in Tennessee painted a grim picture before last week's vote. They said if Chattanooga employees joined the United Auto Workers, jobs would go elsewhere and incentives for the company would disappear.

Now that workers have rejected the UAW in a close vote, Republicans are feeling pressure to fulfill its promises that keeping the union out means more jobs will come rolling in.

The Volkswagen vote has estab-

lished a playbook for denying the UAW its goal of expanding into foreign-owned plants in the region. The UAW was defeated in a 712-626 vote Friday night.

On the first of three days of voting at the Chattanooga plant, U.S. Sen. Bob Corker, R-Tenn., citing unnamed Volkswagen officials, all but guaranteed that the German automaker would announce within two weeks of a union rejection that it would build a new midsize sport utility vehicle at its only U.S. factory instead of sending the work to Mexico.

"What they wanted me to know, unsolicited, is that if the vote goes negative, they're going to announce immediately that they're

going to build a second line," Corker told The Associated Press.

The company reiterated its longstanding position that the union vote would not factor into the decision. Corker also acknowledged that he had no information on whether the company would also expand if the union won.

But the implication was clear, union leaders said. The senator's statements — along with threats from state lawmakers to torpedo state incentives if the UAW won — played a key role in the vote.

UAW President Bob King called it unprecedented for Corker and other elected officials to have "threatened the company with no incentives, threatened workers with a loss of product."

"It's outrageous," King said.

Corker, who had originally announced he would refrain from making comments during the election, changed course last week after he said the union tried to use his silence to chastise other critics.

"I have no idea what effect we may or may not have had," Corker said. "But I think I would have forever felt tremendous remorse if ... I had not re-engaged and made sure that people understand other arguments."

Corker said the day after the vote that he and other state officials planned to restart discussions with Volkswagen officials this week about state subsidies for expanded production in Chattanooga.

Intellectually challenged struggling to find work

By SAM HANANEL
The Associated Press

WASHINGTON — Most Americans with intellectual or developmental disabilities remain shut out of the workforce, despite changing attitudes and billions spent on government programs to help them. Even when they find work, it's often part time, in a dead-end job or for pay well below the minimum wage.

Employment is seen as crucial for improving the quality of life for people with those disabilities and considered a benchmark for measuring the success of special education programs. Yet the jobs picture is as bleak now as it was more than a decade ago.

Only 44 percent of intellectually disabled adults are currently in the labor force, either employed or looking for work, while just 34 percent are actually working, according to a survey by Special Olympics and conducted by Gallup and the University of Massachusetts at Boston. That compares with 83 percent of non-disabled, working-age adults who are in the workforce.

"The needle has not changed in more than four decades," said Gary Siperstein, professor at the University of Massachusetts and one of the authors of the study. "We just can't move the barometer. And we've invested a lot of resources with lots of good programs around the country."

Intellectual disability can include conditions such as autism or Down syndrome. The vast majority of cases are those with limited intellectual capacity — generally an IQ of about 75 or less — and limitations in handling basic life skills such as counting money or taking public transportation.

About 28 percent of working-age adults with intellectual disabilities have never held a job. Even those who do manage to find jobs often end up working only part time and get lower pay than workers without disabilities, the study found.

On the positive side, 62 percent of disabled people who work in a competitive setting have been there three years or more, showing they can work and stay with it.

What can unite liberals and tea partiers? The NSA

By CONNIE CASS
The Associated Press

WASHINGTON — Hoyt Sparks says he has no use for liberal Democrats and their "socialistic, Marxist, communist" ways.

Toni Lewis suspects tea party Republicans are "a bunch of people who probably need some mental health treatment."

Politically speaking, the tea party supporter in rural North Carolina and the Massachusetts liberal live a world apart.

Who or what could get them thinking the same?

Edward Snowden and the National Security Agency.

By exposing the NSA's vast surveillance web, Snowden created a link between tea partiers and liberals — two tribes camped on opposite sides of the nation's political chasm.

These people to the right and left of mainstream America sound a lot alike now.

Sparks, a federal retiree in the Blue Ridge mountain town of Sparta and a political independent, condemns the NSA programs as "a breach of privacy which violates the Constitution."

Lifetime Democrat Lewis, a so-



CHARLES DHARAPAK/AP

Tea party favorite Sen. Rand Paul, R-Ky., and a conservative political group have filed a lawsuit over the National Security Agency's surveillance program.

cial worker in the city of Brockton, near Boston, said, "When we're violating the rights of U.S. citizens, I think that's a dangerous line to be walking."

Whether they are Republicans, Democrats or Independents, almost half of Americans say they either support the tea party movement or call themselves liberal.

Compared with their more moderate Republican or Democratic peers, tea partiers and lib-

erals are significantly more likely to oppose the collection of millions of ordinary citizens' telephone and Internet data, an Associated Press-GfK poll shows.

By a 2-to-1 margin, these two groups say the government should put protecting citizens' rights and freedoms ahead of protecting them from terrorists.

Nearly six in 10 Republicans support the tea party movement. Nearly four in 10 Democrats call

themselves liberals. Combined, they are buoying a coalition of conservative and liberal lawmakers pushing to rein in the NSA, while party leaders balk at anything that might weaken the agency's ability to foil terrorists.

Why does the NSA unite the right and left ends of the political spectrum?

"More extreme political views lead to more distrust of government," said George Mason University law professor Ilya Somin, who's studied the tea party's focus on the Constitution. People at the far ends of the political spectrum are less likely than middle-of-the-road voters to feel government is responsive to them.

On the flip side, Somin said, moderates generally don't follow politics as closely as people at the extremes, so they may be less aware of the scope of the NSA's activities.

The AP-GfK Poll was conducted Jan. 17-21 using KnowledgePanel, GfK's probability-based online panel. It involved online interviews with 1,060 adults. The survey has a margin of sampling error of plus or minus 3.9 percentage points for all respondents.

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NATION

Old vehicles a canvas in Nevada desert

Man's vision: Turn land into 'playground' for artists

By MATT HUFMAN
Las Vegas Sun

GOLDFIELD, Nev. — Some artists work with paint, others with clay. Chad Sorg's challenge was to make art with cars, buses and trucks.

That task was triggered when the Reno artist was driving through Goldfield several years ago and spied a vehicle sticking out of the ground. He explored further and found its creator, Mark Rippie, a longtime resident of this former gold boomtown. Rippie said he wanted to create an "artists' playground" with dozens of old junkers stacked or embedded in the ground serving as canvases.

Sorg was intrigued, and moved here in 2011 to live in a trailer on the land and to create art.

The result of their collaboration is more than 40 rusted, aging vehicles spread over a half a mile, some planted, some stacked, all in juxtaposition to the barren desert. Sorg painted most of the vehicles, and other artists accepted invitations to add their own touches to the project.

There's a portrait of politician Ron Paul on a blue hatchback, its hood buried in the ground. Huge ants and a skull cover an upright white sedan. A rust-colored station wagon, its nose angled into the ground as if it came flying off a cliff and plowed into the dirt, features one word on its driver's door: whoopsy.

Sorg named the display, which is a few hundred yards east of U.S. 93 on the south end of Goldfield, the International Car Forest of the Last Church. The name is a combination of the idea of a national forest that people could visit and a reference to Rippie's website called the Last Church, which espouses a theology that eschews organized religion.

Visitors who want to know why it's there won't find an explanation. There's no sign listing the artists or describing the work.

There are no signs providing directions from the highway, but a burned-out bus stands like a beacon on the ridge above the rest of the vehicles. The source of the old junkers is unclear but, in the Nevada desert, such vehicles aren't exactly hard to find.

There is no confusing this display with the famed "Cadillac Ranch," a display of a dozen Cadillacs standing upright in a field outside Amarillo, Tex., or "Carhenge" in Nebraska, a copy of England's famous landmark made out of a few dozen old vehicles.



PHOTOS BY MATT HUFMAN, THE LAS VEGAS SUN/AP

Creations stand at The International Car Forest of the Last Church in Goldfield, Nev., in September.



The attraction features more than 40 vehicles over a half-mile of desert. Chad Sorg, who named the display, painted most of the vehicles and other artists helped add to the project.

Outdoor art scenes are not unique in Nevada, either. Land sculptor Michael Heizer has moved tons of earth in art projects near Overton and in Lincoln County, and the Goldwell Open Air Museum in Rhyolite features statues and outdoor installations.

Rippie envisioned his car forest

as a free attraction, something to draw people off the road. He wanted to top the number of vehicles at Carhenge and to get into the Guinness World Records. Although it's unclear whether such a record exists, Sorg believes the car forest is the largest of its type.

What do the locals have to say

about the display? In the land of live-and-let-live, they shrug.

Sorg describes the work as a cross between land art — large work done with the earth — and outsider art, a term used to describe nontraditional work often by self-taught artists. In this case, Sorg is the artist, Rippie is the outsider. Sorg is a trained art-

ist who has owned an art gallery. Rippie has a checkered past, with a history of scrapes with law enforcement and other residents in Goldfield.

But Rippie had a vision, a backhoe and land, so Sorg went to work.

"I saw what he saw," Sorg said. After moving to Goldfield, Sorg became the president of the Chamber of Commerce and a tireless promoter of the historic mining town, population 259, and the car forest.

Still, it hasn't become a major attraction, and its future is up in the air.

Sorg, who said he wanted to live out his life on the property, and Rippie are no longer collaborating.

Their relationship had begun to sour and ended after they staged an "End of the World Party," which featured a bus burning. Afterward, and for no stated reason, Sorg said Rippie kicked him off the property. Sorg returned to Reno.

Rippie, 67, is no longer on the scene, either. He was convicted last year on federal gun charges and in November was sentenced to two years in prison.

Sorg, who maintains a Facebook page dedicated to the car forest, hopes someone will buy it and preserve it.

"It was a great thing to bring to the world," Sorg said. "I'd say roadside attractions like this remind us that there are still mysteries in the world."

WORLD

New EU rules to save Romanian sausage

MOGOSOAIA, Romania — Romania's national dish looks like it will be granted a reprieve under new European Union rules.

The Romanian Meat Association said officials in Brussels have agreed that bicarbonate of soda, which gives spicy "mici" bullet-shaped grilled meat delicacies their springy texture, will be permitted by the EU.

Romanian food industry officials said Monday they have been lobbying Brussels since a ban last July on mici. Romanians eat half a million of the skinless sausages per day.

Kevin Hill, a chef in charge of restaurants that sell 6,000 mici per day, said the EU was concerned the additive was being used to disguise bad meat.

The EU's food safety committee will vote Thursday on the additive, followed by a vote in the European Parliament.

5 of 7 missing divers found alive in Indonesia

BALI, Indonesia — Indonesian police say fishermen have found five of the seven Japanese scuba divers who had been missing since Friday off the resort island of Bali.

Police chief Maj. Nyoman Surasika said the five women were discovered alive Monday afternoon on a coral reef near Nusa Penida island.

He said one person was in critical condition and was flown by helicopter to a hospital, while the four others would be evacuated by boat.

The group of six women and one man, including two instructors, disappeared Friday afternoon while diving around mangroves off Bali's southeast coast when strong winds and heavy rain hit the area. Poor weather hampered rescue efforts.

Iran may send forces into Pakistan territory

TEHRAN, Iran — Tehran's interior minister has warned Pakistan that Iranian forces may enter Pakistani and Afghan territory to released border guards seized by a rebel group.

Abdolreza Rahmani Fazli's remarks on state TV come a week after the little-known Jaish al-Adl posted photos on Twitter of five men it claims are border guards it seized near Pakistan.

He said Iran had asked Pakistan to treat the case "strongly and seriously" or allow Iran to secure the remote region "deep on Afghanistan and Pakistan soil."

From The Associated Press



EVAN VUCCI/AP

Secretary of State John Kerry, left, speaks Monday during a news conference with Indonesian Foreign Minister Marty Natalegawa in Jakarta.

Kerry accuses Assad of stonewalling in talks

By MATTHEW LEE
The Associated Press

JAKARTA, Indonesia — Secretary of State John Kerry on Monday accused Syrian President Bashar Assad of stonewalling in peace talks and called on Russia to push its ally to negotiate with opposition leaders.

"Right now, Bashar al-Assad has not engaged in the discussions along the promised and required standard that both Russia spoke up for and the regime spoke up for," Kerry said during a news conference in Jakarta with Indonesian Foreign Minister Marty Natalegawa.

He said Assad's team "refused to open up one moment of discussion" of a transitional government to replace Assad's regime.

"It is very clear that Bashar Assad is trying to win this on the battlefield instead of coming to the negotiating table in good faith," Kerry said.

Peace talks last week in Geneva ended with no progress toward breaking the impasse in the nearly 3-year-old conflict in Syria.

Kerry, who called Syria "a tragedy to the world," also had harsh words for Assad's allies in Moscow.

"Russia needs to be a part of the solution and not be contributing so many more weapons and so much more aid that they are in fact enabling Assad to double down, which is creating an enormous problem," he said.

Russia has told the U.S. it is committed to helping create a transitional government,

Syrian opposition picks chief

BEIRUT — The coalition of Syrian opposition groups in exile announced they appointed a new army chief on Monday, following a year of seeing their influence fade in Syria.

The Western-backed Syrian National Coalition said it was appointing Brigadier Abdul-lah al-Bashir to head the Free Syrian Army. It cited specifically an embarrassing raid on their weapons warehouse by rival rebels last year as a reason for the change.

Al-Bashir replaces Gen. Salim Idris, seen as a secular-leaning moderate.

From The Associated Press

Kerry said, but has not delivered "the kind of effort to create the kind of dynamic by which that could be achieved."

On Sunday, Syrian Foreign Minister Walid al-Moallem blamed the U.S. for the breakdown in negotiations, saying the U.S. tried to "create a very negative climate for dialogue in Geneva."

U.N.-Arab League mediator Lakhdar Brahimi apologized to the Syrian people for failing to reach progress. "I am very, very sorry, and I apologize to the Syrian people that their hopes which were very, very high that something will happen here," Brahimi said.

Egypt: Suicide bomber caused deadly bus blast

By HAMZA HENDAWI
AND JUNG-YOON CHOI
The Associated Press

CAIRO — A suicide bomber was behind a deadly blast that tore through a bus carrying South Korean tourists, killing at least four people, as it waited near an Egypt-Israel border crossing in Sinai, Egyptian security officials said.

The bombing Sunday was the first targeting foreign tourists in the Sinai in nearly decade, raising fears that Islamic militants who have been waging a campaign of violence against security forces in the peninsula are now turning to attack tourism, a pillar of Egypt's economy.

No one has claimed responsibility for the blast. Suicide bombings have been a hallmark of the al-Qaida-inspired militant groups behind the nascent insurgency of the past six months, which has been focused in northern Sinai along the Mediterranean coast, away from the tourist centers on Sinai's southern and eastern Red Sea coast.

The bus, carrying 33 South Korean tourists and two Egyptians — a guide and the driver — was waiting to cross into Israel at the border area of Tabá when the blast took place.

The Egyptian driver and two South Koreans stepped out of the parked bus and went to the cargo hold. As they re-boarded the bus, the bomber pushed in through the open bus door and detonated his explosives, Interior Ministry spokesman Hani Abdel-Latif said.

A badly burnt body at the site of the blast is now thought to belong to the bomber, he said. Egyptian forensic experts were at the site on Monday to inspect the badly damaged yellow bus, but there was no word on their initial findings.

The blast killed the driver and three South Koreans and wounded at least a dozen other tourists on the bus, Egyptian security officials said, speaking on condition of anonymity because they were not authorized to talk to the press.

The Koreans were two guides and a tourist, the Korean news agency Yonhap reported, citing the Foreign Ministry in Seoul.

The tourists were Christians from the Jincheon Jungang Presbyterian Church who had saved for years to visit Biblical sites on the 60th anniversary of their church, Choe Gyu-seob, a curate at the church, told reporters.

According to an itinerary provided to local media by the church, the sightseers left South Korea last Monday and were to visit Turkey, Egypt and Israel over 12 days.

"My mother was a devout Christian," the dead church member's daughter, surnamed Yoon, was quoted as saying by the Yonhap news agency. "I don't know how such a thing could happen. I don't know how to react to this."

Other church members cried Monday as they sat in a car in front of the church, south of Seoul.



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WORLD

Co-pilot hijacks plane in quest for asylum

By JOHN HEILPRIN
The Associated Press

GENEVA — An Ethiopian Airlines co-pilot locked his fellow pilot out of the cockpit, hijacked a Rome-bound plane and landed Monday in Geneva, all in an attempt to seek asylum in Switzerland, officials said.

The Boeing 767-300 plane with 202 passengers and crew had taken off from the Ethiopian capital of Addis Ababa and landed in the Swiss city about 6 a.m. Officials said no one on the flight was injured and the hijacker was taken into custody after surrendering to police.

The plane first sent a distress message while flying over Sudan's airspace on its way to Rome, an Ethiopian official said.

"From Sudan all the way to Switzerland, the co-pilot took control of the plane," Redwan

Hussein, Ethiopia's communications minister, said. He did not elaborate.

Passengers on the plane were unaware it had been hijacked, officials said. Even local authorities at first thought the Ethiopian plane just wanted to land in Geneva for an emergency refueling before realizing it was hijacked, Geneva police spokesman Eric Grandjean said.

Two Italian fighter jets were scrambled to accompany the plane, Geneva airport chief executive Robert Deillon told reporters.

The co-pilot, an Ethiopian man born in 1983, took control of the plane when the pilot ventured outside the cockpit, Deillon said.

"The pilot went to the toilet and he locked himself in the cockpit," Deillon said. "(He) wanted asylum in Switzerland."

A few minutes after landing

in Geneva, the co-pilot left the cockpit using a rope, then went to the police forces close to the aircraft and "announced that he was himself the hijacker," Grandjean said.

It was not immediately clear why the co-pilot, whose name wasn't released, wanted asylum. Ethiopian Airlines is owned by Ethiopia's government, which has faced persistent criticism over its rights record and alleged intolerance for political dissent.

Police escorted the passengers out one by one, their hands over their heads, from the taxiway plane to waiting vehicles.

Geneva prosecutor Olivier Jornot said the co-pilot will be charged with taking hostages, a crime punishable by up to 20 years in prison. The Swiss federal prosecutor's office will take over the investigation.



SAVATORE DI NOLFI, KEYSTONE/AP

Police stand around the aircraft after passengers were evacuated from a hijacked Ethiopian Airlines plane on the tarmac at the airport in Geneva, Switzerland, on Monday.



MOHAMMAD SAJJAD/AP

A Pakistani health worker vaccinates a child against polio in Peshawar, Pakistan, on Feb. 9. U.N. officials say Pakistan's inability to eradicate polio is causing the disease to spread.

Pakistan's polio threatens region

By KATHY GANNON
The Associated Press

PESHAWAR, Pakistan — Just a few weeks ago, 11-month-old Shaista was pulling herself up, giggling as she took her first wobbly steps with the helping hand of her teenage mother.

Then the polio virus struck and Shaista was no longer able to stand, her legs buckling beneath her weight. Today, her mother cries a lot and wonders what will become of her daughter in Pakistan's male-dominated society, where a woman's value is often measured by the quality of her husband.

"It is not a hardship just for the child, but for the whole family," said the child's mother, Samia Gul, 18. "It is very difficult for a poor family like us. She will be dependent on us for the rest of her life."

Shaista is one of five new polio cases to surface in Pakistan in just the first month of this year. Last year, Pakistan recorded 92

new cases, beating Nigeria and Afghanistan — the only other polio-endemic countries — by almost 2 to 1, the World Health Organization said.

Pakistan's beleaguered battle to eradicate polio is threatening a global, multibillion-dollar campaign to wipe out the disease worldwide. Because of Pakistan, the virus is spreading to countries that were previously polio-free, U.N. officials say.

"The largest polio virus reservoir of the world" is in Peshawar, in northwestern Pakistan near the border with Afghanistan, according to the WHO.

Shaista and her parents share a two-room mud house with a couple of goats, a half-dozen squawking chickens and 10 other relatives in Pakistan's western Khyber Pukhtunkhwa, or KPK, province, where Islamic militants often gun down health workers distributing vaccines and send suicide bombers to blow up police vehicles that protect them.

The latest casualty was a police constable killed Tuesday protecting a team of vaccination workers in northwest Pakistan. During a two-day vaccination campaign in Peshawar earlier this month, 5,000 police were deployed to protect health workers, most of whom earn barely \$2 a day.

Fresh cases of polio — traced through genetic sequencing to the Pakistani strain of the disease — are showing up in countries that were previously polio-free, including Syria and Egypt, as well as in the Gaza Strip, said Ban Khalid Al-Dhawi, the spokeswoman for UNICEF in Pakistan. UNICEF is tasked with persuading a reluctant tribal population that lives along Pakistan's border with Afghanistan — perhaps one of the most dangerous places on the planet — to vaccinate their children.

"A lot of countries that spent so much money and resources eradicating polio are worried," Al-Dhawi said in an interview.

S. Korean lawmaker jailed

The Associated Press

SEOUL, South Korea — A South Korean court sentenced a left-wing lawmaker to 12 years in prison and six colleagues to shorter terms Monday for plotting a pro-North Korea rebellion in the event of a war on the Korean Peninsula.

Lee Seok-ki, from the small United Progressive Party, was arrested in September for allegedly discussing attacks on national infrastructure with 130 colleagues during secret meetings in May.

Tensions were especially high between North and South Korea following Pyongyang's third nuclear test last February and its repeated subsequent threats of nuclear war against Seoul and Washington.

Lee, a first-time lawmaker, has denied the allegations. He said Seoul's spy service fabricated the charges to divert public at-

tention from an investigation into allegations that its agents were engaged in illegal online campaigning to help President Park Geun-hye, then a ruling party candidate, win presidential elections in December 2012. The spy agency has said its agents were only trying to cope with possible North Korean cyberwarfare and pro-North Korea online postings in the South.

The Suwon District Court said in its ruling that Lee's punishment was inevitable because his plot posed a "substantial and apparent threat" to South Korea. The verdict mentioned strong evidence and what it called consistent and reliable testimony by an informant, described as a former Lee colleague, as the reason for the conviction, according to a court statement.

Lee's party said it would appeal the ruling to a higher court.

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NATION

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A HEALTHY MUPPET MESSAGE

Cardiologist, Sesame Street producers team up to promote wholesome habits

By MARILYNN MARCHIONE
The Associated Press

Bert and Ernie jump rope and munch apples and carrots, and Cookie Monster has his namesake treat once a week, not every day. Can a Muppets minimakover improve kids' health, too?

A three-year experiment in South America suggests it can. Now, the Sesame Street project is coming to the United States.

Already, a test run in a New York City preschool has seen results: Jahmeice Strowler, 4, got her mom to make cauliflower for the first time in her life. A classmate, Bryson Payne, begged his dad for a banana every morning and more salads. A parent brought home a loaf of bread instead of Doritos.

"What we created, I believe, is a culture" of healthy eating to fight a "toxic environment" of junk food and too little exercise, said Dr. Valentin Fuster, a cardiologist at New York's Mount Sinai Hospital.

Six years ago, he started working with Sesame Workshop, producers of television's Sesame Street, on a project aimed at 3- to 5-year-olds.

"At that age, they pay attention to everything" and habits can be changed, he said. The need is clear: A third of U.S. children and teens are obese or overweight. Many don't get enough exercise, and a recent study found that kids' fitness has declined worldwide. They're at high risk for heart and other problems later in life.

"The focus is younger and younger" to try to prevent this, said Dr. Stephen Daniels, a University of Colorado pediatrician and a spokesman for the American Heart Association. The group's annual conference



SETH WENIG/AP

Oumou Balde, 4, left, chews on a plastic strawberry at the Sheltering Arms Learning Center in New York.

in November featured Fuster's experiment as one of the year's top achievements in heart disease prevention.

For Sesame Street, the project offered a chance to improve the lives of young viewers and give a makeover to certain Muppets.

"While Cookie Monster is an engaging figure, we felt there was an opportunity there to really

model healthy eating," said Jorge Baxter, regional director for Latin America for Sesame Workshop.

The new message is that certain things like cookies are "something you can eat sometimes, but there are some foods that you can eat all the time," like vegetables, he said. The healthy messages have been gradually incorporated into the television show, and its producers even made a doctor Muppet — Dr. Ruster (pronounced "Rooster") — in Fuster's image for the preschool project.

It launched in Colombia because U.S. schools that Fuster approached years ago were reluctant, but a wealthy family's foundation was willing to sponsor the experiment in Bogota.

It involved 1,216 children and 928 parents from 14 preschools. Some were given the program and others served as a comparison group.

Kids had training on healthy habits and how the body works for an hour a day for five months using Sesame Workshop-produced videos, a board game (the "heart game"), songs, posters and activities. Parents were involved through take-home assignments and workshops that focused on overcoming barriers to good food and exercise. For example, in areas with poor access to parks or play spaces, parents were coached to encourage kids to use stairs instead of elevators and to walk instead of taking a bus.

Children's weight and exercise habits were measured at the start and again 1½ and three years later. Although many moved or dropped out by the time the study ended, researchers documented a significant increase in knowledge, attitude

and health habit scores among kids in the program versus the comparison group.

The proportion of children at a healthy weight increased from 62 percent at the start to 75 percent at three years for those in the program. Ironically, in Colombia, that mostly meant that more undernourished kids grew to reach a healthy weight.

In New York, where the program plans to launch in several early childhood and Head Start programs this spring and fall, project leaders will have to tackle under- and overweight kids.

"A lot of the kids are from low-income families, shelters," and many have poor access to healthy foods, said Rachael Lynch, director of educational services for an Episcopal Social Services preschool, The Learning Center, in Harlem. "It's a mecca for fast food around here. We're trying to get them to walk past the Chinese food or pizza or McDonald's, to go home and make something."

Her preschool tested the Sesame Street project last summer and "it really took off" with kids and parents, she said.

"They love it. The kids relate — I can't stress it enough" — to the Sesame Street characters, she said.

In Colombia, the program is now expanding to about 20,000 children, and in Spain, a project is starting in Madrid. In New York, a foundation Fuster runs at Mount Sinai will sponsor the U.S. launch, aided by private donors.

Dr. Jaime Cespedes, a pediatric and heart specialist who helped lead the project in Colombia, believes it will succeed wherever it is tried.

"Sesame knows kids, knows media and how to communicate the messages," he said. "When you get the kids to deliver the message to the family, change will come."



JOHN BARRETT,
COURTESY OF SESAME WORKSHOP/AP

WORLD

Security at Olympics increasingly uneven

By ANGELA CHARLTON
The Associated Press

SOCHI, Russia — Hotel guests are walking, unchecked, past unused metal detectors. Security guards are no longer poking around at the pockets and ankles of every single person entering Olympic facilities. Tangerines and bottles of Coke are making it through security barriers that banned them two weeks ago.

For all the warnings that security in Sochi would be invasive and aggressive, it's appearing more and more uneven, and in places almost relaxed.

No attacks have been reported since the Olympics started Feb. 7, and the world's attention has turned to skiing and skating instead of security measures. Organizers insist security overall is tight.

But risks remain. Just a few hundred miles away, a long-running insurgency goes on, and Islamic militants stage regular attacks elsewhere in the Caucasus Mountains range that is hosting Olympic ski races. Russia has deployed tens of thousands of forces across the Sochi region, and U.S. authorities sent two warships to the Black Sea.

Here are some things learned about security across the Olympic landscape from various spot checks conducted by — and the daily working experiences of — nearly two dozen Associated Press journalists as the first 10 days of the Sochi Games unfolded:

Slipping past security

Ahead of the games, guards at security stations around Olympic Park and in the nearby mountains carefully checked every bag, car and body. Some visitors with food were forced to eat it before passing through the gates.

In recent days, visitors have made it through metal detectors with coins, keys,



DAVID J. PHILLIP/AP

A security team member keeps watch near the Olympic Cauldron as the sun sets at the 2014 Winter Olympics on Friday in Sochi, Russia.

watches, belts and credit cards. The metal detector at one well-visited hotel on the Sochi shore doesn't appear to be used at all — and when a visitor offered to have her bag checked, she was waved past.

Some guards — it seems more stringent in mountain venues than by the coast — are still inspecting every item, down to the smallest lip balm or a Valentine's Day balloon, scanned for explosives. Others have let through backpacks containing a pocket-knife, water bottles, fruit and shampoo.

At some checkpoints, officers stop buses to scan beneath them with special long mirrors for explosives. Those checks have become irregular.

Sometimes security measures are designed to be inconsistent so potential evildoers can't figure out the system. But the attitude of the ubiquitous guards seems increasingly laid back — some are flipping



through their phones or listening to music while manning their posts — instead of calculated to thwart enemies.

Reason to worry?

The only incident so far has been a Ukrainian man's unsuccessful effort to hijack a Turkish plane the night of the opening ceremony.

But the underlying danger that worried athletes and spectators before the games

remains. Weeks before the Olympics, suicide bombers killed 34 people in two bombings in the city of Volgograd. An insurgency has been simmering across the Caucasus Mountains region for two decades, and Chechen rebel leader Doku Umarov called on followers to attack the games.

Security experts warn that attackers could choose soft targets away from the Olympic sites such as shopping centers. Some have raised the possibility that jihadists could have infiltrated Sochi long before security was tightened.

Tracking troublemakers

Russian security services wouldn't comment on lax security measures. But a string of arrests shows that they're keeping an eye on those who might disrupt events or want to call attention to abuses by Russian authorities.

An Italian gay-rights activist, Russian environmental activists and members of the Circassian ethnic group native to the Sochi region have all been detained in recent weeks.

Sochi organizing committee spokeswoman Alexandra Kosterina has shrugged off questions about inconsistent or confusing security measures.

"We ensure and our authorities ensure that Sochi is secure," she said. "It is not an issue for us."

International Olympic Committee president Thomas Bach suggests security measures at Olympic venues themselves are less invasive because authorities sealed off the larger region so tightly.

"The parameters of security are far from the main venues," he told the AP last week. "The security forces are acting in an extremely friendly way so the Olympic atmosphere is not harmed at all."

Heavily scrutinized, Putin displays studied casualness

By JIM HEINTZ
The Associated Press

SOCHI, Russia — So far during the Winter Olympics, Vladimir Putin hasn't shown off his paces, scuba-dived to a treasure site or engaged in any sort of the he-man stunts he's known for.

But the Russian president's vigor and determination have been on display in quieter ways during these Winter Olympics — which, for him, have been a long round of visits to officials, athletes' facilities and sporting events. That's harder duty than it sounds.

Competitors at the Olympics get nervous knowing that the eyes of the world will be on them for a few minutes. For Putin, that scrutiny extends for the entire 17 days of the games. And many of those eyes are waiting for him to fail.

Although the home-country crowds may be largely on his side, Putin has received much criticism from abroad for the Olympics' staggering cost, Russia's crack-down on dissent and the widely denounced law banning pro-gay "propaganda" to minors.

Serious questions have been raised about whether his security forces are capable of fending off threatened attacks by Islamic

militants and whether Russia has been cooperating enough with Western governments on protecting fans and athletes.

Through it all, Putin has conducted himself with the slightly chilly aplomb that is his hallmark. During more than a dozen years in power, he's rarely allowed himself to be spontaneous; those moments when he did were often embarrassing, as when he inexplicably nuzzled a boy on the stomach. But he has learned how to use a choreographed moment to present an image of studied casualness.

Any leader of a country hosting the Olympics would feel obliged to show up at the events, but Putin's own athletic inclinations make his visits more than just protocol.

"He's clearly a big sports fan, and that adds to that," said International Olympic Committee spokesman Mark Adams.

Putin's Sochi appearances may also have helped soften his image to foreigners of a stern autocrat. "It was the first time I've seen him smile," spectator Josh Straub, of Red Deer, Alberta, said of the Russian president's visit to the Canadian team's headquarters.

Livia Rickli, of Amsterdam, wasn't as willing to buy into his attempts at charm.

"In the Netherlands, we have



Russian President Vladimir Putin watches the men's 4x10K cross-country relay at the Winter Olympics on Sunday in Krasnaya Polyana, Russia.

the gay thing, so we weren't such good friends" with Putin, she said. "Now, you know, suddenly he's there, suddenly he's nice."

In a sense, Putin can be seen as an analogue to the athletes on the snow and ice of Sochi. He's strongly disciplined, consistent, and trained well enough to make the near-impossible look easy.

Gay activist says she was detained in Sochi

By NATALIYA VASILYEVA
The Associated Press

SOCHI, Russia — An Italian gay-rights activist said she was detained by police at the Olympics after being stopped while carrying a rainbow flag that read in Russian: "Gay is OK."

Police on Monday denied that happened.

Vladimir Luxuria, a former Communist lawmaker in the Italian parliament who has become a prominent transgender rights crusader and television personality, told The Associated Press she was held for several hours Sunday before she was released. She said she was not charged.

Her website published a photograph of her after her release. Before her arrest, she tweeted: "I'm in Sochi. Greetings in the colors of the rainbow, in Putin's face."

Sochi organizers said Monday they had no information of any such incident.

"We've talked to police and they have told us there is no record whatsoever to any detention or arrest," Sochi organizing committee spokeswoman Alexandra Kosterina said.

A duty officer at the central po-

lice station in Sochi told the AP they have never had an Italian national in custody.

Protesters are routinely arrested at unauthorized rallies in Moscow. Often, officers at the police station are so overwhelmed with paperwork, they keep some people at the station for hours and let them go later without registering the detention or giving the detained person any document explaining it.

Luxuria's agent, Fabio Saccani, told the AP from Italy that his client had been held for five to six hours in a station room, and she was unable to understand what was happening because only Russian was spoken.

Saccani said police confiscated the rainbow flag from Luxuria, who tried to grab it back. At that point, he added, she was taken away. Saccani was not exactly sure where that happened.

Andrei Tanichev, owner of Sochi's main gay club, Mayak, said Monday that Luxuria was there Sunday night and was "enjoying" herself and "even took part in the (drag) show."

Tanichev said Luxuria left on her own and he has no knowledge of the detention.

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OPINION

Treat 'child prostitutes' as victims

By MALIKA SAADA SAAR

Would you call Tami a child prostitute? A pimp kidnapped Tami on her way home from school in Los Angeles. He held her captive for six months, raping, beating and starving her. At night, he sold Tami for sex with other men. Tami tried to escape by telling every john who purchased her that she was only a kid. For months, Tami pleaded with her buyers: "I'm only 15. Can you please take me to a police station?" But none did. When she finally encountered police officers, they did not rescue her; they arrested her. How ran away from an abusive foster care home in Florida at 12. She was found at a bus stop by a pimp who promised to love and care for her forever. He sold her to at least seven men a night. Finally she, too, was arrested, for child prostitution.

Unfortunately, there are such situations are not typically seen as child victims of serial rape and abuse. Instead, they are left to fend for themselves or treated as child offenders, funneled into the juvenile justice system for child prostitution or related charges.

About 293,000 U.S. children are at risk of being exploited and trafficked for sex, according to a 2011 FBI report on trafficking. Most are girls ages 12 to 14. They often are abducted or lured by pimps/traffickers, beaten into submission and sometimes even branded with the pimp's name.

Across the U.S., there are child sex markets not terribly different from those in Cambodia, Thailand and India. Girls are sold in this country with the same disregard for human dignity, and they are often tortured in the same ways when they try to escape. Like trafficked girls everywhere, they are hidden in plain view. They are right in

We must call this trafficking what it is: serial, systematized rape. And we must care for these girls.

front of us — on "dates" at motels or bars. They are purchased through websites such as Backpage.com, where their underage status is signaled with terms like "fresh" or "new to town," or even the girl's weight. Often they are dressed up to look older.

Many of the girls are children who were in foster care. One survivor explained to me how the foster care system is a convenient supply chain for traffickers. "In most of my 14 different placements in foster care homes, I was raped and attached to a check," she said. "I understood very early that I could be raped, cared for and connected to money. It was therefore easy to go from that to a pimp, and at least the pimp told me that he loved me."

Child welfare systems do not properly identify or help children who are being trafficked for sex. Even when there is recognition of abuse, child welfare agencies often regard it as outside of their purview because the perpetrator is not a parent or caregiver. Child welfare agencies then shift the responsibility to law enforcement, which has failed to establish consistent protocols that treat trafficked children as victims of child abuse. These children are not routinely interviewed by sexual violence experts, as is done in other instances of child rape. Nor do prosecutors provide them the legal protections afforded to other sexually assaulted minors.

Because they often are seen as prostitutes, these victims are routed into the juvenile justice system. In many cases, the girls are handcuffed and detained, sometimes for days or longer. A 13-year-old girl recently was arrested in North Hollywood

for juvenile prostitution, put in handcuffs and carried off to detention. In California, like many other states, juvenile prostitution carries a sentence of up to two years. Whether girls are arrested for prostitution or just loitering, they are often the ones placed behind bars.

I have heard many judges express frustration that there is no safe place to send these girls. They cannot necessarily be returned to foster care or their families because their home life is often perilous and they might run away again. Nor can they be released onto the streets, where the pimps are waiting. For trafficked girls, there is rarely the option of safe, therapeutic centers. As Rep. Ted Poe, R-Texas, has pointed out, this country has more animal shelters than shelters for exploited children. Judges often detain these girls, believing that jail is the safest of many bad options.

But should an abused child be incarcerated for the abuses perpetrated against her? The people who rape these girls, the politely termed "johns," are rarely arrested for statutory rape, child endangerment or sexual assault of a minor.

Perhaps it is too difficult to accept what happens on U.S. soil, to our own daughters. Regardless, we must call this trafficking what it is: serial, systematized rape. And we must care for these girls, too often invisible to society as victims and survivors of child sexual abuse. Because there is no such thing as a child prostitute.

Malika Saada Saar is special counsel on human rights at the Raben Group and director of the Human Rights Project for Girls. This column first appeared in The Washington Post.

America's drone program must keep flying

Chicago Tribune editorial

There is much we don't know about the American citizen who is the target of a potential U.S. drone strike in Pakistan. He is believed to be associated with al-Qaida. He reportedly has been involved in plotting attacks against the United States. His name hasn't been revealed. We imagine he's avoiding rooftops and other open-air venues that have proven fatal to other terrorist chiefs.

What we know is that U.S. government officials have been debating since last summer whether to authorize a strike against the man. What's taking so long? If he poses an imminent threat, this debate should take hours or days, not months.

There's a lot of speculation about this saunter to judgment.

It could be that the United States still is deciding whether it is lawful to target this American citizen on foreign soil. Under a new drone policy announced by President Barack Obama last year, the Justice Department now reviews decisions to add Americans to overseas drone target lists.

Officials still may be building a convincing case that the suspect is a serious threat to American security, even though one former U.S. official told The Wall Street Journal that the CIA already has concluded that he meets the criteria for a drone strike.

Another possible reason for delay: The strike would need to be launched by the CIA, not the Pentagon as U.S. leaders prefer, because Pakistan refuses to allow open American military action on its territory.

The danger: One of America's most effective anti-terrorist programs may be strangled by red tape.

The danger: One of America's most effective anti-terrorist programs may be strangled by red tape.

At a congressional hearing this month, U.S. Rep. Mike Rogers, the Republican chairman of the House Intelligence Committee, said: "Individuals who would have been previously removed from the battlefield by U.S. counterterrorism operations for attacking or plotting to attack against U.S. interests remain free because of self-imposed red tape."

The new rules, Rogers said, "are endangering the lives of Americans at home and our military overseas in a way that is frustrating to our allies and frustrating to those of us who engage in the oversight of our classified activities."

We can't think of a more dangerous prospect than U.S. drones tangled in bureaucracy and political second-guessing, missing the chance to eliminate al-Qaida and Taliban terrorists.

Let's say Obama defended the extraordinarily effective drone program while promising to narrow its scope and increase oversight and transparency. We supported that decision. But we also warned: The United States risks losing the advantage of dramatic American officials need to become entangled in slow-motion bureaucracy back home. We fear U.S. warriors shrinking from what in effect are battlefield decisions because they have one eye on Congress, or judges, or some other overseer who is not their commander in chief.

Greater American officials need to choose targets carefully in Afghanistan

and Pakistan because drone strikes are politically unpopular and pols aren't keen on allowing bases for American drones.

Pakistan's top leaders have loudly denounced drone strikes as a violation of their country's sovereignty. When a U.S. drone strike killed Pakistan's Public Enemy No. 1 terrorist last year, Pakistan's Interior Ministry official called it — astonishingly — "the murder of all efforts at peace." Never mind that the Taliban used those alleged peace negotiations to rearm and launch even deadlier attacks against Pakistan security forces and citizens.

Afghan President Hamid Karzai also has spoken out against drone strikes. Karzai has refused to sign a security agreement negotiated last year by the U.S. and his government. Obama has threatened to yank all American troops by the end of the year, including a counterterrorism force, if Karzai doesn't sign. Better strategy: Wait until a new president is elected in April. He'll sign.

If the U.S. pulled its forces from Afghanistan, drone bases in that country likely would have to be shuttered. Al-Qaida and Taliban terrorists across a wide expanse of mountainous territory on the Afghanistan-Pakistan border could stop nervously glancing at the skies.

That's why the drones need to keep flying. If they're in the cross hairs, so is the security of America and its allies.

OPINION

Tea party smart to chart new path to goals

BY DOYLE MCMANUS
Los Angeles Times

Ever since a wave of conservative insurgents arrived in Washington after the congressional election of 2010, Congress has careened from one tea party-inspired fiscal crisis to another, from the debt-ceiling shutdown of 2011 to last year's 16-day government shutdown.

But last week, when the debt ceiling needed to be raised again, conservative Republicans decided not to fight. They still voted no, but they meekly stood aside to let the ceiling rise.

"You've got to know when to hold them and when to fold them," Rep. Michele Bachmann, R-Minn., who once reigned as chairwoman of the House Tea Party Caucus, explained to *The Washington Post*. "Now is not the time to fight."

Could it be that the tea party is growing up?

To some tea party militants around the country, Bachmann's words sounded like surrender. But the Minnesota congresswoman and her colleagues on Capitol Hill were simply embracing lessons learned from October's disruptive government shutdown.

Back then, tea party conservatives expected the American public to rally behind their demand to defund President Barack Obama's health care plan — but the public didn't rally. Instead, voters turned against the GOP for staging a needless crisis, driving the party's popularity to record lows.

From that experience, the tea partiers learned some crucial lessons. The first was: Don't stage a crisis without a plan to win something from it.

The demands made by congressional conservatives in the fall were nonstarters, given a Democratic Senate and a president with veto power. The only thing they could offer was obstruction, and Americans didn't like that. That brought the tea party

to lesson No. 2: Branding yourself as "the Party of No" only gets you so far.

A third lesson came from the calamitous rollout of Obama's health care plan, which rescued the GOP from its slump. With that, conservatives in Congress learned that if you think your opponent's signature project is a train wreck, the best thing to do is get out of the way and let the voters watch it crash.

Now we're starting to see the tea party apply the lessons learned.

Last week, for example, Heritage Action, the political arm of the conservative Heritage Foundation, staged a conference to showcase the insurgents' work: a workfest that included plans for health care, welfare reform and even deregulating college accreditation. Most of the ideas weren't very new; the novelty, instead, was the focus on the nuts and bolts of changing federal policy instead of red-meat rhetoric about defunding the government.

"We can't just be against President Obama's agenda," Rep. Raul Labrador, R-Idaho, said. "We must stand for something."

Tea party conservatives have also been working to forge deeper institutional ties. The movement may have begun as a grass-roots collection of activists in funny hats, but as Theda Skocpol and Vanessa Williamson, of Harvard University, have pointed out, it has become powerful by linking those activists to established fundraising organizations such as Dick Armey's FreedomWorks and an old-line conservative think tank, Heritage.

None of that means the civil war in the GOP is over, just that a smarter tea party may be less inclined to sabotage itself. Almost 90 percent of John Boehner's House Republicans voted against the speaker on the debt ceiling, but they didn't make a scene while doing it.

Tea party-backed candidates are expected to challenge incumbent Republican senators in six states — Kansas, Kentucky,



J. SCOTT APPLEWHITE/AP

Sen. Ted Cruz, R-Texas, arrives on Capitol Hill on Wednesday for a vote to extend the Treasury's borrowing authority. Cruz insisted on a 60-vote threshold for the Senate to proceed to legislation to allow the government to borrow money to pay its bills.

Mississippi, South Carolina, Tennessee and Texas. At this point, none of the challengers appears to have caught fire, but in both 2010 and 2012, the GOP establishment was shocked by more than one insurgent from the right wing who suddenly dethroned a veteran. (It was also shocked by several insurgents who turned out to be terrible candidates; the party's working harder to weed those out this year.)

No matter how the primaries turn out, the tea party has held onto its standing as the biggest faction in the Republican Party. An ABC-Washington Post poll last month found that 63 percent of Republican voters say they support the tea party, down from

72 percent last year but still an impressive number.

The tea party was supposed to be dead and the GOP on the way to moderate repositioning after Obama's victory and Democratic congressional gains in November 2012," Skocpol wrote in the *Journal of Democracy*. "[But] the tea party's hold on the GOP persists beyond each burial ceremony."

One reason for that is that the tea party's congressional wing, at least, has acquired one of the most important qualities of any durable political movement: the ability to learn from its own mistakes.

Doyle McManus is a Los Angeles Times columnist.

Again in Florida, the nug was the one with the gun

BY STEPHEN A. CROCKETT JR.
The Root

Michael Dunn was strapped when he pulled into the gas station that night as Lil Reese's "Beef" blared from the speakers of the red Dodge Durango almost parked there. He let his kids know he wasn't feeling the "thug music." She left the car to get wine and Dunn decided he was going to do something about it.

In prison terms, he was "handling the yard."

In government terms, he was using his white privilege as his bully pulpit.

When the loud-music-playing teenagers responded by cutting the music down, he was satisfied. But when the kids realized that Dunn wasn't the police or their parents or an authority figure whose instructions they had to follow, they cranked "Beef" back up to ear-drum-rattling levels. Dunn was disrespected. In D.C. terms, he was "carried," in New York City terms, he was "sassed" and any kid from the streets to the jailhouse will tell you that disrespect doesn't get argued about. It gets dealt with fast.

The "Beef" lyrics would have been more fitting coming from the shooter's car:

"F-k n-i-g-a you don't want no beef/ In the field we play for keeps."

Dunn's attorney is absolutely right when he says that this is about a "thug subcul-

What Dunn stood his ground against wasn't violence initiated or enacted, it was violence imagined. He heard the music, made assumptions and responded in kind. We've heard this song played out before.

ture," as George Zimmerman and Dunn are a part of a vigilante thug mentality that seems to be accepted in Florida. This new breed of thug is as elusive as he is gangster. At the front end he's angry, armed and looking for a fight. Then he morphs into a cherubic teddy bear, as Zimmerman did in court, or he dons goofy science teacher/Mister Rogers sweaters, as Dunn did.

This new breed of thug bears arms and shoots unarmed black children with impunity, and what's examined afterward isn't the shooter's thug mentality but whether the child's hoodie made him menacing or if the child was armed or if the children were criminals because they enjoyed rap music and too many curse words. All of this under the guise of Florida's Stand Your Ground law.

In Florida, a black boy is a criminal until proven otherwise and can be shot and killed and put on trial later. From the grave, the burden of proof is put on the prosecution to prove that the boy was nice, and kind and a good kid. Say that was listening to violent music and that's almost

enough to accuse him of a violent act.

What was on trial in Florida wasn't Dunn as much as the young men who were ostracized for their dress and the stereotypical assumptions that come with young black life. What Dunn stood his ground against wasn't violence initiated or enacted, it was violence imagined. He heard the music, made assumptions and responded in kind. We've heard this song played out before.

Instead of the common-sense idea that the boys were leaving the gas station where they were being fired upon, the defense turned this into a fleecing of the scene to dispose of a gun that had to be there because Dunn said so. And as a white man his word held more weight than the three teens who were shot at. His word held more weight than the police who said there was no gun.

Never mind that it was the teens who returned to the scene of the shooting to receive help while the actual thug, Michael Dunn, did what thugs do and rolled out because the block was hot.

While Jordan Davis laid on the unforgetting cement struggling to breathe, suffering from gunshot wounds in each leg and one through his liver, lung and aorta, Dunn left the scene and went back to the life he was living before he shot up the block.

Back at the hotel, he walked his dog and ordered a pizza. He didn't call the police or wait until they arrived to explain that he feared for his life. He didn't even tell his fiancée about the supposed gun he saw until almost a month later. Was that because Dunn followed the thug code?

He kept it gangsta right up until the police contacted him, and even then he expressed no remorse for the shooting.

The turn here and the scariest part is that generally thugs don't have the ability to morph from heartless sociopath into a fat, sad lump of all-American heartland. This new breed of thug is more violent and heartless because he can shoot a black teen in cold blood one moment and then transform into a caring, frightened citizen all by changing his clothes. And a sympathetic jury and an understanding justice system allow him to get away with murder.

So Jordan Davis didn't get justice on his birthday. His killer isn't in jail for killing him because a jury had trouble seeing past the sweater and the skin color to who the real thug was in this case.

Stephen A. Crockett Jr. is an associate editor at *The Root*.

NATION

Feeling the heat

NYC under pressure to add more female firefighters

By COLLEEN LONG

The Associated Press

Nationwide, the firefighting profession remains overwhelmingly male, with women making up only 3.4 percent of the total workforce.

causes alarm

NEW YORK — As a New York City firefighter, Saringya Srisakul didn't work with another woman for five years, and when she did, she took pictures because it was so rare.

"We were so excited to see each other," she said. "For me, that just doesn't happen."

There are only 37 women out of 10,500 uniformed firefighters in New York City, about a third of 1 percent, among the lowest percentage of any department in the nation.

That number is expected to grow after a record number of women took the latest exam following heavy recruitment spurred by a court order two years ago. Six women entered the fire academy just last month.

"Out of a city of 8 million people, there cannot be only 37 women who are qualified enough and interested in being firefighters — that's just ridiculous," said Srisakul, president of the women's firefighters association, which has made boosting numbers a priority. She is working to help women pass the rigorous physical exam and meet fire academy expectations to graduate into the job.

Nationwide, the firefighting profession remains overwhelmingly male, with women making up only 3.4 percent of the total workforce, according to federal labor statistics. Arguments for why there are so few women on the job are common: They don't want to work in a dangerous, dirty industry and aren't strong enough to deal with the physical demands, which include wearing up to 125 pounds of gear or carrying unconscious victims down a darkened stairwell.

"We've tried to recruit women. The reality is for whatever reason, it doesn't seem to be an attractive job," said Steve MacDonald, spokesman for Boston's fire department, which has 18 women out of a force of 1,470.

None of those arguments really holds water, according to Marc Bendick, an economic consultant who did a study on female firefighters nationwide. He found that men and women who take the physical

fitness test known as Candidate Physical Ability Test, developed by fire chiefs around the country, pass at about the same rate as long as the test is administered fairly.

"It's not every woman in the U.S. who could pass that test," Bendick said. "But the kind of women who apply for fire jobs, very athletically inclined, they pass. And not every man can pass it either."

Bendick said other big-city fire departments have more balanced numbers, such as 16 percent in Minneapolis and nearly 5 percent in Denver. And he noted that previously male-dominated jobs, such as military combat and policing, have already made better strides. New York City's police department, for example, has more than 6,000 female officers out of about 35,000 — or about 18 percent.

Bendick's study, which researched the experiences of about 600 female and 600 male firefighters, cited as reasons for the lack of women in firefighting an unreasonably high physical standard unrelated to the job duties, a lack of recruitment and hostile behavior by male colleagues.

Srisakul, who has been a firefighter for nine years, said only 78 percent of the firehouses in New York are outfitted with facilities for women. Other female FDNY

firefighters say they have been harassed, and sexist posters were regularly displayed. At least one recently filed a gender discrimination lawsuit that was settled out of court.

In Chicago, there are about 5,000 firefighters and around 120 are women — and a federal judge just awarded \$2 million after ruling the department discriminated against women with a physical fitness test that was measuring brawn over the ability to do the job.

In New York, the FDNY is under court order to hire more diverse classes, but that legal battle has focused mostly on minority men. Members of a black firefighters union sued; only about 9 percent of the firefighters are black or Hispanic, though more than half its residents identify with a racial minority group. A federal judge ordered a new written test and better recruitment efforts by the department to boost numbers of minorities. Of the latest class of 319 probationary firefighters who entered the academy last month, 46 percent are minorities.

To recruit more women, the FDNY launched an aggressive campaign, including attending events organized by Nontraditional Employment for Women, the U.S. military and female athletic clubs and organizations. Candidates are offered additional support through the mentoring program that pairs current female firefighters with female candidates.

New York's written test is given every four years. Depending on scores, test takers are asked back for a physical fitness exam and finally for slots in the academy. Out of the 42,161 would-be firefighters who took the most recent fire exam, nearly 2,000 women took the written exam — the most ever.

There are only 37 women out of 10,500 uniformed firefighters in New York City, about a third of 1 percent, among the lowest percentage of any department in the nation.

SHIFTING GEARS



PHOTOS BY BRUCE BISPING, (MINNEAPOLIS) STAR TRIBUNE/MCT

Above: The new Indian is featured at the Mies Outland dealership in Watkins, Minn. Below: Mies Outland technicians Brent Bachman, left, and Randy Reiter uncrate a bike.

Indian motorcycle rollout shifts into overdrive

By DEE DEPASS
(Minneapolis) Star Tribune

The rollout of the famed Indian motorcycle line wouldn't be quite right if the bikes weren't surrounded by the splashiest of showrooms to put their rugged, stylish looks on full display.

Medina, Minn.-based Polaris Industries Inc., which bought the brand in 2011, announced that 140 dealers will sell the bikes by the end of the year, up from just 14 a year ago. The new dealers are pulling out all the stops to boost Indian's swagger, investing hundreds of thousands of dollars to build or expand showrooms.

The Mies Outland dealership in Watkins, 25 miles southwest of St. Cloud, Minn., recently put the finishing touches on its \$750,000 Indian showroom, only the second in Minnesota to sell the high-performance bikes. Mies Outland already sells Polaris' Victory motorcycles, ATVs and snowmobiles, but to sell Indian motorcycles, the 97,000-square-foot dealership had to commit to an upgrade.

"The Indian is where a massive amount of growth is positioned. The Indian is going to be huge," said Steve Mies, who owns the dealership with his brother, Jeff.

Contractors installed the last of the steel framing for the 3,000-square-foot addition and bolted a second large Indian sign onto the building. Steve Mies said the showroom addition officially opens Saturday, but he's already hired four new employees just to

“The Indian is where a massive amount of growth is positioned. The Indian is going to be huge.”

Steve Mies
Indian dealer

work on Indian sales and bikes.

It's a scenario playing out nationwide as a swell in new dealers suddenly need workers to receive, sell and maintain the new Indian inventory.

Mies Outland has 47 workers, but needs still more. Mies' dealership presold 50 Indian bikes soon after Polaris unveiled three 2014 models at the Sturgis, S.D., motorcycle rally last August, and he sold six more bikes after the International Motorcycle Show at the Minneapolis Convention Center in January. With the spring riding season approaching, he's determined to be ready.

Indian motorcycles were first made in Massachusetts in 1901 and went on to gain national fame by breaking speed records in the 1920s and 1950s. It's that story line that inspired the 2005 movie "The World's Fastest Indian," with Anthony Hopkins.

The original manufacturer went bankrupt in 1953, and the product then struggled as subse-

quent owners attempted comebacks with limited success.

Polaris is determined to put Indian back on the map. The company has a goal to sell \$750 million worth of Polaris-made motorcycles in seven years. Total bike sales are now roughly a third of that and growing, thanks to the Indian brand.

President and Chief Operating Officer Bennett Morgan noted that Polaris's motorcycle sales "accelerated significantly in the fourth quarter." They rose 94 percent to \$69 million, driven entirely by Indian.

"Shipped Indians are selling quickly, and early buyer satisfaction and quality ratings are outstanding," Morgan said.

By comparison, sales of Polaris's traditional line of Victory motorcycles grew less than 8 percent during the fourth quarter.

Determined to maximize awareness and profits, Polaris is also taking Indian overseas. Steve Menneto, senior vice president in charge of motorcycles, said the goal is to have 70 Indian dealerships outside the United States. So far, the company has signed up dealers in Canada, Italy, Germany, France, Japan, China, Australia and New Zealand.

The bike recently appeared for the first time in a showroom in New Delhi. Because of a 112 percent tax rate on imports, Indian motorcycles — which retail for \$19,000 to \$23,000 in the United States — will cost \$50,000 in India.





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US MILITARY AND DIPLOMATIC SALES IN GERMANY

37

HWY

MPG



AMERICAN ROUNDUP

Officials seize more than a ton of shark fins

CA SAN FRANCISCO — More than a ton of illegal shark fins were seized from a vendor in San Francisco, state wildlife officials said Friday.

Michael Kwong, 42, of Kwong Yip Inc., was cited for having 2,138 pounds of the fins, which violates California's ban that went into effect in July, said Lt. Patrick Foy, of the California Department of Fish and Wildlife.

Possessing shark fins, selling or trading them is a misdemeanor under California's law, so Foy said it will be up to a judge to determine any penalty.

Investigators were led to Kwong during an investigation of an Emeryville restaurant cited for selling shark fin soup on Jan. 27.

Infant left on train tracks is rescued

CO PUEBLO — A woman placed a 2-week-old girl on railroad tracks in Pueblo and ran away Friday, but two city workers immediately rescued the infant, who appeared to be unharmed, police said.

The baby was taken to a hospital as a precaution, police said.

Witnesses told police two trains were on the track but neither was moving. It wasn't clear how far the trains were from the baby.

Witnesses detained the woman until officers arrived. She was incoherent and was taken into custody for questioning and evaluation, police said in a news release.

Police identified the woman in custody as Jessica Sloan, 31. The police statement said Sloan was wanted on several arrest warrants, including one for failure to appear in court on a theft charge.

Reported intruder shot dead at door of home

WA PASCO — A man was shot to death early Friday at a Pasco home where a woman reported an intruder.

The Tri-City Herald reported that police Capt. Jim Raymond said the woman and a male resident awoke to pounding at the front door and the man grabbed a gun. A confrontation took place, and Stephan Sergio Aceves, 28, was fatally shot. Police found Aceves's body in the home's front yard.

Raymond said it appears the attempted break-in may have been random. The residents' names have not been released.

The resident who fired the gun was questioned by investigators but not arrested.

Sea turtles released after hospital rehab

FL ISLAMORADA — A male and female loggerhead sea turtle, rehabilitated at the Florida Keys-based Turtle Hospital, have been released off the island chain.

"Gizmo" and "Kristi" swam into the water simultaneously Friday with many of the roughly 200 spectators playfully shouting

THE CENSUS

800



8

The number of bags of suspected heroin seized by authorities from a man traveling to Rutland, Vt., by train. An affidavit from a federal agent says members of the FBI and the Drug Enforcement Administration were waiting at the Amtrak station Wednesday night when Chamey Merrick arrived. The Rutland Herald reported that agents searched his backpack and found the suspected drugs. Authorities said Merrick told them he had traveled to Rutland two other times to sell heroin.

The number of pounds of marijuana a New Jersey man arranged to have sent to him from California. As a result, Zachary Cohen, 24, of Edison Township, has been sentenced to six years in prison and five years of probation. He was arrested last August after he and a woman went to the Linden, N.J., post office to pick up the package. He pleaded guilty in October to second-degree drug possession charges.



PHOTOS COURTESY OF REED (COLLEGE) MAGAZINE/AP

Snowball crash

Above: A large snowball crashed into a Grove Quad dormitory at Reed College in Portland, Ore. The crash ripped a wall off its studs and narrowly missed a window, left. No one was injured in the collision. College officials said the snowball was 40 inches in diameter and weighed 800 to 900 pounds.

Valentine's Day wishes.

Gizmo was discovered last October suffering from emaciation and a head wound. The reptile was treated with antibiotics, lactulose, vitamins and honey wound care.

Kristi, an adult loggerhead, was found entangled in a fishing trap line and received physical therapy on her back flipper as well as anti-biotics and vitamins.

The release marked the launch of a cooperative venture between Save-A-Turtle, a Keys-based turtle protection organization, and the Wyland Foundation. Marine life artist Wyland created exclusive artwork that is being integrated in Save-A-Turtle's fundraising efforts.

2 skiers killed by avalanche identified

OR PORTLAND — A backcountry ski guide and his client were identified Thursday as the people killed in an Eastern Oregon avalanche, while two of their rescued companions were recovering at a hospital after suffering broken bones and spending more than 24 hours stranded on a snowy slope.

Baker County Undersheriff Warren Thompson said the bodies of Shae Coulter, 30, an aerospace engineer from Seattle, and Jake Merrill, 23, a guide from Bellingham, Wash., remained on the mountain because the avalanche risk was too great for recovery teams.

The avalanche struck Tuesday as a party of six experienced skiers and two guides was on its third day of a five-day trek through the backcountry of the Wallawha-Whitman National Forest.

School launches free Jefferson course online

VA CHARLOTTSVILLE — Peter S. Onuf tells people up front that he is not "a Jefferson worshiper."

The University of Virginia scholar, who teaches a free online course on Thomas Jefferson that debuted Monday, is struck by the paradox of a slave-owning Founding Father who espoused liberty. Onuf's own political sympathies lie with the party that opposed the nation's third president.

"I'm a native New Englander," Onuf said, "and if I had my du-

thers, I'd probably be a Federalist. But he is a fascinating guy."

For U-Va., Jefferson is indispensable and omnipresent — the founder of a public university that aims to live up to his vision of an "academical village."

Runaway camel injures man; owner sought

CA LOS ANGELES — A runaway camel injured a man and damaged a car Friday in the city of Palmdale in northern Los Angeles County. Officials said the owner of the animal could face charges.

The daughter of the injured man, Skylar Dossenbach, told KCBS-TV that her father was hurt when the camel stomped him as he tried to corral the animal.

A call reporting the camel, which broke loose about 8:38 a.m., came from a person in one of the cars that the animal charged, Sheriff's Deputy John Cereoli told the Los Angeles Times.

The camel was caught and penned up about 9:15 a.m., Cereoli said.

Sheriff's officials told KTLA they would look into pursuing

charges against the owner of the camel once he or she is found.

Man gets 16½ years for shaking infant son

WA TACOMA — The Pierce County prosecutor said a man has been sentenced to 16½ years in prison for violently shaking his 7-day-old son, severely injuring the boy.

Joshua Sullivan, 19, pleaded guilty last month to first-degree child assault. He was sentenced Friday. Prosecutors had sought an exceptional sentence of 20 years.

Court records show Sullivan was awakened at about 3 a.m. on May 23 by the crying infant. He went to check on the boy but became frustrated because the baby kept "fussing."

Prosecutors said Sullivan shook his son as he carried him up and down the stairs, causing the infant's head to hit the wall.

The baby was taken to a hospital a few hours later and underwent emergency brain surgery.

From wire reports

FACES

Finding his focus

Writer/director Goldsman overcame much to bring 'Winter's Tale' to screen

By GLENN WHIPP
Los Angeles Times

You might not peg the guy who wrote "I, Robot" and adapted "The Da Vinci Code" as a self-described "shameless romantic." But then, when looking back on "A Beautiful Mind," the movie that won him a screenplay Oscar, Akiva Goldsman remembers it as a "promise that love conquers all."

So when Goldsman says that he likes to see the world as "a grown-up fairy tale where nothing is without purpose," it makes perfect sense that 30 years ago, riding the New York subway, he cried like a baby while reading Mark Helprin's novel "Winter's Tale." A big-hearted book that toggles between two centuries in a mythic New York City, Helprin's story ponders the notions of enduring love and eternal destiny. It's dense, complicated and magical, considered by some to be among the great American novels of the last half-century.

When Goldsman gained currency in Hollywood, he persuaded Warner Bros. to option Helprin's novel for him with the idea that he'd adapt and produce. But the book is a beast, and Goldsman found himself easily distracted by other projects, producing the Will Smith superhero comedy "Hancock" and writing, producing and directing episodes of "Fringe."

"There's something very literary and wondrous about the idea of misunderstood destiny and loss leading to a different kind of gain," says Goldsman, 51. "But it was a hard concept for me to figure out how to put on screen for quite a long time."



WARNER BROS./MCT

Screenwriter/producer/director Akiva Goldsman (right) first read the novel "Winter's Tale" 30 years ago. Goldsman, who says the story brought him to tears, fought through many distractions and complications to bring a movie version, starring Colin Farrell (left), to life.

Goldsman was taking another pass at "Winter's Tale" in summer 2010 when his wife, Rebecca Spinkings-Goldsman, died of a heart attack. She was 42. After months of trying to think and feel his way through the traumatic loss ("Everything just breaks," Goldsman says), he woke up one morning and started writing "Winter's Tale" again. Goldsman worked at home in a tiny bell tower that his wife had converted into an office.

"The book suddenly went from something I loved to the only thing that mattered," Goldsman says.

And as such, Goldsman felt he needed to direct the film based on it. To make that happen, he called in 20 years of favors, enlisting old friends like Russell Crowe and Jennifer Connelly to work for scale (or slightly above it). He also waived his remaining writing fees and put his Directors Guild minimum salary back into the movie, now playing in many base theaters overseas.

Warner Bros. executives figured the movie would cost about \$75 million to make. They told Goldsman he could have about half that. Goldsman pared most of the book's unexplained mythology, pushing the love story between a 19th-century thief (Colin Farrell) and a dying young woman ("Downton Abbey's" Jessica Brown Findlay) to the fore.

Filming, heavy on-location work in New York, was hectic, delayed slightly by Hurricane Sandy. The company hired to do the visual effects, Rhythm & Hues, went bankrupt. Goldsman kept driving forward, happy finally to be making the film.

"I'm the kind of romantic that likes to find the meaning in things," Goldsman says. "Just in its natural course, life is sufficiently hard. And if you can find the hope underneath that, that there is connectedness and some reason to it, then there's some comfort in that. That's what I've learned anyway. And I think that feeling is in the movie."

'12 Years a Slave' honored at BAFTAs

By JILL LAWLESS
The Associated Press

The force of "Gravity" was strong at the British Academy Film Awards on Sunday — but it was the unflinching drama "12 Years a Slave" that took the top prize.

Steve McQueen's visceral, violent story of a free black man kidnapped into servitude in the 19th-century U.S. South was named best picture. Its star, Chiwetel Ejiofor, took the male acting trophy.

Ejiofor thanked McQueen for bringing the story to the screen.

Holding the trophy, the British actor told McQueen: "This is yours. I'm going to keep it — that's the kind of guy I am — but it's yours."

McQueen reminded the ceremony's black-tie audience that, in some parts of the world, slavery is not a thing of the past.

"There are 21 million people in slavery as we sit here," he said. "I just hope 150 years from now our ambivalence will not allow another filmmaker to make this film."

The prizes, coming two weeks before Hollywood's Academy Awards, are watched as an indicator of likely Oscars success.

It was a good night for lost-in-space thriller "Gravity," which won six prizes, including best director for Alfonso Cuarón.

The 3-D special effects extravaganza also took the awards for sound, music, cinematography and visual effects. And despite its mixed parentage — made in Britain by a Mexican director and starring American actors — it was named best British film.

Con-artist caper "American Hustle" charmed its way to three prizes, including original screenplay and supporting actress for Jennifer Lawrence. Its spectacular '70s stylings took the hair and makeup award.

The best-actress prize went to Cate Blanchett for her turn as a socialite on the slide in "Blue Jasmine."

The supporting actor prize went to Barkhad Abdi, who made an explosive screen debut as a Somali pirate in "Captain Phillips."

The prize for adapted screenplay went to "Philomena," based on the true story of an Irish woman's decades-long search for the son she was forced to give up for adoption.



Ejiofor

'Lego Movie' blocks new releases at box office

The Associated Press

"The Lego Movie" built a huge lead on top of the weekend's new releases at the box office.

In its second outing, the Warner Bros. animated film featuring the voices of Chris Pratt, Elizabeth Banks and Will Arnett earned \$48.8 million to take first place, according to studio estimates Sunday. That brings the film based on the toy brick-building franchise's domestic box office total to \$129.1 million, cementing it as one of the biggest blockbusters of the year thus far.

"It's crossing over to all audiences," said media analyst Paul Dergarabedian. "It's not just a kids' movie. There's something for boys, girls and adults, as well."

The romantic comedy "About Last Night" starring Kevin Hart and Michael Ealy came in second place with \$27 million. The strong showing further demonstrated Hart's clout as a box-office draw. The actor-comedian's other film, the buddy cop com-

edy "Ride Along" with Ice Cube, nabbed \$8.8 million in its fifth weekend to take the sixth spot at the box office.

The action-packed "RoboCop" reboot captured third place with \$21.5 million.

The weekend's other new releases, the coming-of-age drama "Endless Love" (\$13.4 million) and the novel adaptation "Winter's Tale" (\$7.8 million) earned the fifth and seventh spots at the box office.

2nd novel coming from Rowling's alter ego

J.K. Rowling is back with a novel involving a writer whose acid-tipped pen might have led to murder.

Publisher Little, Brown said Monday that it is preparing a second book by Robert Galbraith, the "Harry Potter" author's thriller-writing pseudonym.

"The Silkworm" sees the return of detective Cormoran Strike, the ex-soldier hero intro-

duced in "The Cuckoo's Calling." In the new book, Strike investigates the disappearance of a novelist who has written a book that features scathing descriptions of real people.

"The Silkworm" will be published June 19 in Britain and June 24 in the U.S.

'Juno' actress Page comes out as gay

Ellen Page, who won the hearts of moviegoers as the pregnant teenager in the 2007 film "Juno," has come out as gay.

The 26-year-old told a Las Vegas audience Friday, "I'm here today because I am gay." She was speaking to a conference of counselors who work with teenagers who identify as lesbian, gay, transgender, bisexual or queer.



Page

Page says she suffered for years because she was afraid to come out. She told the audience, "I'm standing here today, with all of you, on the other side of all that pain."

Other news

■ "The X Factor" creator Simon Cowell's father, a spokesman for Cowell says he and socialite Lauren Silverman welcomed their baby son on Friday in New York. The infant is named Eric, after Cowell's father.

■ Director Diao Yinan's "Black Coal, Thin Ice," a detective thriller set in China, won the Berlin International Film Festival's top prize on Saturday.

■ The husband of Jenni Rivera, the Mexican-American pop star who died with six others in a 2012 plane crash, sued the aircraft's owners Friday alleging wrongful death. Former Los Angeles Dodgers pitcher Estaban Loaiza seeks unspecified damages. The City News Service reported.

BUSINESS/WEATHER

Social media giving banks an inside look at borrowers

By TIM GRANT

Personalist Post-Gazette

The personal information that friends share on social media websites is being used by a growing number of financial institutions to build a credit profile for potential borrowers, in addition to the official credit report. How that information can—or should—be used by lenders is still up for debate.

“Our view is there is a constant push by lenders to manage risk for their loans,” said Thomas Pryor, a spokesman for PersonalLoanOffers.com, a personal loan-matching network based in Fort Lauderdale, Fla. “They want more data to qualify the creditworthiness of the loan applicant. Our company policy is against it.”

He said lenders are logging

into Facebook, Twitter, Match.com and other social media websites to look for items that provide insight into a loan applicant's lifestyle and behavior. They also use such websites to verify any public information about an applicant.

Lending Club, a peer-to-peer lending network based in Redwood, Calif., routinely uses social media to gather information about loan applicants but says the information only would be used to deny a loan if it raises questions about an applicant's identity.

“We don't use social media to make credit decisions,” said Scott Sanborn, chief operating officer at Lending Club. “We do sometimes review online data to verify identification or prevent fraud.”

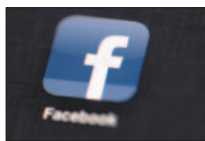
PNC Financial Services does not review its customers' social media activities when reviewing loan applications, spokesman

Fred Solomon said.

Lenders are not the only ones using social media. Collection agencies and lawyers use social media to track down people. Hiring managers also are using social networks to conduct reference checks.

Lenders, in general, are cautious of denying loan applications based on what they discover on social media websites because they run the risk of violating the Equal Credit Opportunity Act, which requires lenders to tell borrowers why they have been denied credit.

“The rule requires lenders disclose the top four primary reasons the loan was not approved,” said Neda Feddis, senior vice president and deputy chief counsel for consumer protection and payments at the American Bankers Association in Washington.



Lenders can use Facebook, Twitter and other social media sites to glean information about loan applicants.

“If social media is in there, it would be listed.”

Feddis said banks are required to monitor social media for complaints about the institution itself. If a bank representative sees a tweet from a customer—such as one about a job loss—that raises eyebrows, he would probably inquire further. The bank would not make a lending decision based on a tweet alone.

Representatives at PersonalLoanOffers felt strongly that what anyone says in a social media setting should not have any bearing on their financial life.

“Our position is we condemn the trend,” Pryor said.

EXCHANGE RATES

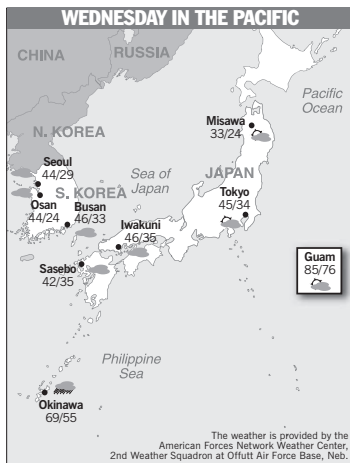
Military rates	
Euro costs (Feb. 17)	\$1.4051
Dollar buys (Feb. 17)	\$0.7117
British pound (Feb. 17)	\$1.71
Japanese yen (Feb. 18)	99.00
South Korean won (Feb. 17)	1,034.00
Commercial rates	
Bahrain (Dinar)	0.3771
British pound	\$1.6717/0.5982
Canada (dollar)	1.0880
China (Yuan)	6.0670
Denmark (Krone)	5.4523
Egypt (Pound)	0.8649
Hong Kong (Dollar)	\$1.3673/0.7313
Euro	1.7553
Hungary (Forint)	226.49
Israel (Shekel)	3.5131
Saudi Arabia (Riyal)	3.7504
Kuwait (Dinar)	0.2820
Norway (Krone)	6.1019
Philippines (Peso)	44.60
Poland (Zloty)	3.30
Saudi Arabia (Riyal)	3.7504
Singapore (Dollar)	1.2612
South Korea (Won)	1,059.47
Switzerland (Franc)	0.8928
Taiwan (Dollar)	32.33
Turkey (Lira)	2.1849

(Military exchange rates are those available to customers at military banking facilities in the country of issuance for Japan, South Korea, Germany, the Netherlands and the United Kingdom. For nonlocal currency exchange rates (i.e., purchasing British pounds in Germany), check with your local military banking facility. Commercial rates are interbank rates provided for reference when buying currency. All figures are foreign currencies to one dollar, except for the British pound, which is represented in dollars-to-pound, and the euro, which is dollars-to-euro.)

INTEREST RATES

Prime rate	3.25
Discount rate	3.25
Federal funds market rate	0.06
3-month bill	0.10
30-year bond	3.70

WEATHER OUTLOOK



Tuesday's US temperatures

City	Hi	Lo	Wthr	City	Hi	Lo	Wthr	City	Hi	Lo	Wthr	City	Hi	Lo	Wthr
Able, Tex	76	42	Pdly	Chattanooga	64	41	Cir	Fort Wayne	38	21	Pdly	Louisville	53	32	Cir
Akron, Ohio	70	42	Pdly	Cheyenne	50	31	Cir	Fresno	67	43	Cir	Lubbock	77	35	Cir
Albany, N.Y.	32	17	Snow	Chicago	38	16	Cir	Goodland	60	31	Cir	Macon	70	46	Cir
Albuquerque	67	39	Pdly	Cincinnati	47	26	Cir	Grand Junction	48	28	Pdly	Madison	38	17	Pdly
Allentown, Pa.	67	39	Pdly	Cleveland	38	22	Pdly	Grand Rapids	38	20	Pdly	Medford	51	40	Rain
Anchorage	22	9	Snow	Colorado Springs	60	34	Cir	Great Falls	47	30	Cir	Memphis	64	39	Cir
Asheville	61	34	Snow	Columbia, S.C.	69	42	Pdly	Green Bay	43	24	Cir	Midland-Odesa	79	40	Pdly
Atlanta	64	49	Cir	Columbia, S.E.	69	51	Cir	Harrisburg	41	24	Snow	Milwaukee	38	18	Pdly
Atlantic City	48	26	Snow	Columbus, Ohio	78	28	Cir	Hartford	34	16	Snow	Minneapolis	42	23	Pdly
Austin	76	54	Snow	Concord, N.H.	29	8	Snow	Hartford	34	16	Snow	Missoula	43	26	Rain
Baltimore	74	54	Pdly	Corpus Christi	75	44	Pdly	Honolulu	80	69	Cir	Mobile	57	40	Cir
Baton Rouge	74	44	Pdly	Dallas-Ft. Worth	75	44	Pdly	Houston	76	59	Cir	Montgomery	72	52	Cir
Bilings	40	30	Cir	Dayton	42	26	Cir	Huntsville	67	42	Cir	Nashville	69	34	Cir
Birmingham	68	49	Cir	Daytona Beach	75	50	Cir	Indianapolis	40	23	Pdly	New Orleans	72	60	Cir
Bismarck	34	26	Pdly	Denver	59	32	Pdly	Jackson, Miss.	70	50	Cir	New York City	39	28	Snow
Boise	51	35	Cir	Des Moines	50	29	Cir	Jacksonville	75	46	Pdly	Newark	56	32	Pdly
Boston	35	17	Snow	Detroit	35	20	Pdly	Janeau	34	26	Cir	Norfolk-Va.	56	32	Pdly
Bridgeport	38	22	Snow	Duluth	37	18	Rain	Kansas City	55	33	Cir	North Platte	54	29	Cir
Brownsville	80	63	Pdly	El Paso	79	48	Cir	Key West	61	38	Cir	Okahoma City	50	37	Cir
Buffalo	33	22	Snow	Elkins	46	38	Pdly	Knoxville	59	40	Cir	Omaha	57	31	Cir
Burlington, Vt.	29	7	Cir	Erie	36	22	Snow	Laurens	72	59	Cir	Orlando	79	51	Cir
Caribou, Maine	21	-2	Cir	Evansville	47	43	Rain	Las Vegas	70	48	Pdly	Paderborn	37	28	Cir
Charlotte, N.C.	44	29	Pdly	Fargo	-4	-21	Cir	Las Vegas	70	48	Pdly	Pendleton	55	36	Rain
Charlotte, S.C.	72	47	Cir	Flagstaff	58	25	Pdly	Lincoln	59	31	Cir	Philadelphia	46	28	Snow
Charleston, W.Va.	54	32	Cir	Flint	35	20	Pdly	Little Rock	66	36	Pdly	Phoenix	83	56	Pdly
Charlotte, N.C.	65	36	Pdly	Fort Smith	69	36	Cir	Los Angeles	70	53	Cir	Pittsburgh	40	27	Snow

The weather is provided by the American Forces Network Weather Center, 2nd Weather Squadron at Offutt Air Force Base, Neb.

National temperature extremes
Hi: Sun., 89, San Angelo, Texas
Lo: Sun., -31, Embarras, Minn.

Stripes

SERVICE DIRECTORY

The Daily Guide to Navigating the European Business Market



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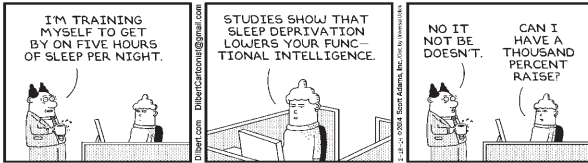
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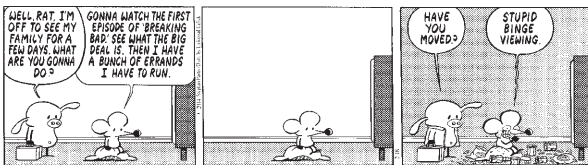
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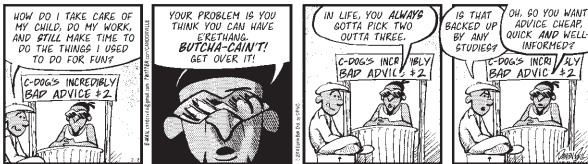
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Non Sequitur



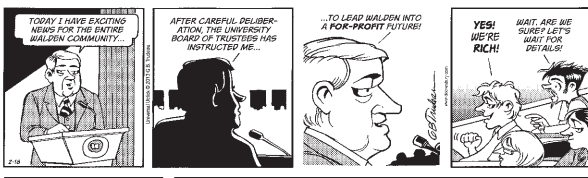
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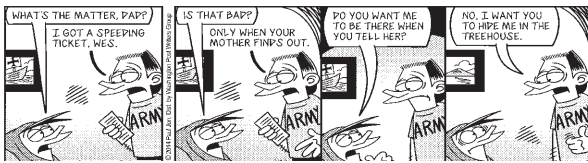
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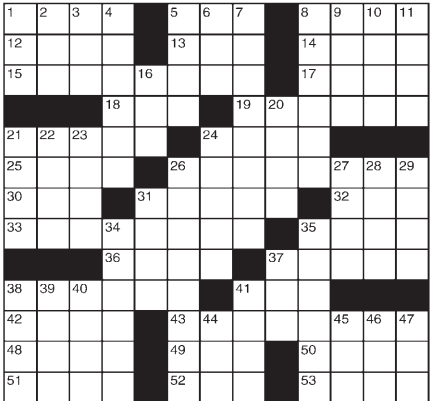
Doonesbury



ort Knox



Eugene Sheffer Crossword



ACROSS

- Senior moment?
- Resistance measure
- Zlich (Sp.)
- Arizona tribe
- Japanese pond fish
- Sci-fi fleet
- Cake, pie, etc.
- Squirrels' home
- Meadow
- Filled pastry of India
- Perfect
- Grow weary
- Squarish
- Pleasures
- "— had it!"
- Under a spell
- CBS logo
- Cracks a code
- Mock
- Midmonth date
- Helped
- Opposite of "improve"
- Early bird?
- Mideast nation
- Passbook entries
- Carte
- Sapporo sash
- Met melody
- Jab
- "The Tonight Show" aier
- Garden intruder

DOWN

- Third degree?
- Shad product
- Chances, for short
- Lose
- Gumbo ingredient
- Scalding
- Arrows, darts, etc.
- Connecticut, the — State
- Roundish
- Accomplishes
- On the briny
- Conger, for one
- Desertlike
- Footnote abbr.
- Peace symbol
- Pt. of CEO
- Some messages
- Trust
- Noggin
- Sort
- Offspring
- Jekyl's alter ego
- On the racy side
- Puzzle maker?
- Past
- Weakening
- Sandwich cookie
- and file
- Grand story
- Recede
- Age
- Dead heat
- Depressed

Answer to Previous Puzzle



2-18

CRYPTOQUIP

Y JNAZPW VYWP WPD JYGLDD
NIDQ G JNNM-JBYRRYCZ
WNNB. FNA LNABM OGF YW

VGO G BNIDQ'O ORGWABG.
Yesterday's Cryptquip: A GARDENER NEEDED TO MAIL OUT TEN POUNDS OF MULCHING MATERIAL, SO HE USED THE COMPOST OFFICE.
Today's Cryptquip Clue: D equals E

coach Tic Price to interim coach.

COLLEGE BASKETBALL

McDermott passes Bird in Creighton upset

Bluejays defeat No. 6 Villanova as star moves to No. 13 in D-I scoring

By ERIC OLSON
The Associated Press

OMAHA, Neb. — Creighton apparently has Villanova's number. Doug McDermott matched his season high with 39 points and passed Larry Bird for 13th on the Division I career scoring chart, and the 18th-ranked Bluejays won 101-80 on Sunday to move into first place in the Big East, a half-game ahead of the No. 6 Wildcats.

Their 21-point victory came less than a month after they hammered Villanova by 28 in Philadelphia on the strength of a record three-point shooting performance.

"I didn't think we could play much better than we did at Villanova," Creighton coach Greg McDermott said. "But I'm not sure we didn't play better today. We didn't have the crazy shooting night from the three-point line, but the other parts of the game were really good."

Villanova coach Jay Wright said getting blown out again was frustrating because he and his staff came up with a much different defensive plan. The Wildcats didn't double-team McDermott as much, and they denied the ball to three-point marksman Ethan Wragge.

McDermott did his thing, as usual, and Creighton's bench produced 39 points.

"They've got the best player in the country, and he makes everybody better around him," Wright said. "They're just a tough matchup for us. Our style of play and their style of play kind of leads to

these kinds of games. We've got to find the answer if we face them again."

The Bluejays (21-4, 11-2) beat the same ranked opponent twice in the same season for the first time in program history. They also won their 16th straight at home, matching their longest streak since moving into the CenturyLink Center in 2003.

McDermott went over 30 points for the ninth time this season and 23rd time in his career. He took over the national scoring lead, at 25.9 points a game. He passed Bird, the Indiana State great of the late 1970s, on the NCAA's scoring list with his fourth three-pointer with 13:23 left.

"It's pretty crazy. That's one of my idols," he said. "Imagine if [Bird] had the three-point line and he stayed four years. He would be way ahead of me. It's really cool just to be in that category with some of those guys."

The senior forward left to an ovation with 1:43 left, embracing his coach and father before sitting down. He now has 2,863 career points.

"Doug was obviously incredible," Greg McDermott said. "He has a way of stepping up for these games, and today was certainly an example of that."

Isaiah Zierden had 13 points, Devin Brooks added 12 and Grant Gibbs had 11 for the Bluejays, who shot a season-best 64.2 percent. Their previous high was 56.9 percent in their 96-68 win at Villanova on Jan. 20.

James Bell scored 18 points for the Wildcats (22-3, 10-2) before



NATHAN HARRIS/AP

Creighton's Doug McDermott, right, goes for a layup past Villanova's James Bell in the first half Sunday in Omaha, Neb. McDermott matched his season high with 39 points and passed Larry Bird for 13th place on the Division I career scoring chart as Creighton won 101-80.

fouling out with 6:11 left. Jay-Vaughn Pinkston scored all 15 of his points in the second half, and Dylan Ennis had 11.

Wragge, who made nine three-pointers and had a career-high 27 points in the teams' first meeting, didn't get off a shot until the third minute of the second half and didn't make a field goal until 7:37 remained. Villanova mimicked other recent Creighton opponents in denying the senior forward the ball, and he finished with five points.

Villanova had won six straight since its loss to the Bluejays last

month. The Wildcats never led after the first minute.

The start of the game wasn't quite like it was in Philadelphia last month. That night, Wragge was 7-for-7 on three-pointers in the first 7 minutes and Creighton ran off to a 28-point victory over then-No. 4 Villanova after making a Big East-record 21 shots from behind the arc.

McDermott scored Creighton's first 11 points Sunday. He made two threes, converted a three-point play after spinning to the basket for a left-handed layup and scored off Gibbs' pass through

the lane to the delight of the sell-out crowd of 18,797.

Villanova was the highest-ranked team to play Creighton in Omaha since fourth-ranked DePaul visited in December 1983.

"I live for these kinds of games," McDermott said. "These are the best, especially playing against a top-10 team here in Omaha. I don't think any of us ever thought we'd see this day. You've got to get fired up for this kind of game and atmosphere. It was a great start, and that carried the momentum for our team the rest of the game."

AP Top 25 roundup

Defense helps keep No. 4 Wichita State unbeaten

The Associated Press

EVANSVILLE, Ind. — No. 4 Wichita State relied on the basics Sunday: defense and ball security.

Again, it was the perfect combination. The Shockers forced 18 turnovers, finished with a season-high 14 steals and finally locked down Evansville's shooters late to pull away for an 84-68 victory that kept them one of the nation's two undefeated teams.

"We wanted to extend them, get their timing disrupted. I don't think we expected that many steals," Fred VanVleet said. "There were only a few times where we had breakdowns where we weren't really where we were supposed to be."

Few expected the Shockers (27-0, 14-0 Missouri Valley Conference) to be in this spot — even after reaching the Final Four last April.

They are one of only 21 teams in NCAA history to win their first 27 games, extended their school-record winning streak and are 14-0 in conference play for the first time in school history.

And after Arizona's latest loss, Wichita State could be poised to move up another notch in the poll, getting even closer to Division I's only other perfect team — No. 1 Syracuse. A win Wednesday at Loyola also would assure the Shockers at least a share of the regular-season conference title and the No. 1 seed in the Valley tournament — with three league games still on the docket.

How have they done it?

With a balanced offense and a staunch defense that Evansville knows is the best in the Valley.

Wichita State trumped the Purple Aces by outscoring them 23-2 off turnovers and 10-4 on fastbreaks. Coach Gregg Marshall didn't even need a stat sheet to tell him what had happened. He estimated that the Shockers topped the 40-deflection mark.

The other numbers were just as glaring. VanVleet and Ron Baker each finished with a career-best five steals, and, not surprisingly wound up as the top scorers. Baker had a career-high 26 points, while VanVleet added 18 and eight assists and

flirted with the possibility of a triple-double throughout the second half.

Nebraska 60, No. 9 Michigan State 51: Terran Petteway scored 23 points and Walter Pitchford added 18 as visiting Nebraska topped Michigan State.

Petteway had 16 points in the last 20 minutes after Pitchford scored 12 before the break for the Cornhuskers (14-10, 6-6 Big Ten).

No. 13 Louisville 102, Rutgers 54: Luke Hancock scored a career-high 25 points, including six three-pointers, and host Louisville throttled Rutgers.

The Cardinals (21-4, 10-2 American Athletic Conference) made a season-high 16 shots from beyond the arc on 30 attempts for their fourth straight win, completing a season sweep of the Scarlet Knights (10-16, 4-9). Louisville shot 56 percent overall in posting its biggest win this season.

Freshman guard Terry Rozier added a career-high 16 points, hitting four threes, and Wayne Blackshear scored 10 with a couple of three-pointers in Louisville's last scheduled conference game against Rutgers.

No. 21 Wisconsin 75, No. 15 Michigan 62: Frank Kaminsky had 25 points and 11 rebounds, and Wisconsin smothered host Michigan in the first half before holding on.

The Wolverines (18-7, 10-3 Big Ten) cut an 18-point deficit to three in the second half, but Kaminsky personally went on a 7-2 run after that, helping Wisconsin regain control. The Badgers (21-5, 8-5) have won four straight — and they committed only two turnovers.

Temple 71, No. 23 SMU 64: Dalton Peyper scored 24 points to help host Temple beat SMU.

Playing without injured starter and leading rebounder Anthony Lee, Temple (7-17, 2-10 American Athletic Conference) knocked off a Top 25 opponent for the first time since March 10 last year against No. 21 Virginia Commonwealth. The Owls were 0-5 against ranked teams this season, but have now beaten at least one in each of the last seven years. The Mustangs (20-6, 9-4) had a four-game winning streak snapped at the end of an eventful week.

NBA



GERALD HERBERT/AP

Lakers guard Kobe Bryant openly talked on Sunday about his fear that at age 35, his body may be starting to give out.

Bryant: Are my best days behind me?

By BRETT MARTEL
The Associated Press

NEW ORLEANS — Kobe Bryant acknowledges the best days of his brilliant career might be in the past. He still wants to play in another NBA All-Star game, though.

The 16-time All-Star made that much clear while sitting out Sunday's 2014 edition with nagging pain and swelling in his left knee, stemming from a broken leg. He said he would even be interested in entering a future three-point contest.

Playing in an All-Star game "means you're one of the best players in the world," Bryant said shortly before Sunday night's game, which he watched from the bench in a tan suit. "It's obviously a goal of mine."

The Los Angeles Lakers star is trying not to delude himself about how much longer he can play at the level to which he's been accustomed. He has played in only six games this season, fracturing his tibia shortly after his return from an Achilles tendon injury.

Asked if he was concerned his body might be starting to give out, he responded, "Of course. Absolutely."

"That's part of the excitement of the challenge, that level of uncertainty: Is this it? ... Are my best days behind me?" Bryant said. "To have those conversations with yourself and not be intimidated by that and ... not succumbing to that is part of the challenge."

As for the Lakers, who are 18-35 and virtually out of playoff contention, Bryant sees a chance for a quick turnaround.

"What we have coming up this offseason with the cap space, and what we have ahead of ourselves seems to be right in the Lakers' wheelhouse, in terms of turning things around pretty quickly," Bryant said. "We've had summers like this, and they have never really faltered. They have normally made really sound and excellent decisions that put us right back in contention."

Irving, LeBron lead East All-Stars

Cavs PG scores 31, dishes 14 assists en route to MVP

By BRIAN MAHONEY
The Associated Press

NEW ORLEANS — LeBron James usually has his fun in June, when the Miami Heat have won NBA championships the last two years.

Doesn't mean he's OK with losing in February.

And he certainly won't stand for his team getting picked on.

Three straight times he had left a loser, and he was even more driven for this All-Star game after a half season of his conference getting ridiculed for its mediocrity.

"We've been getting killed a lot this season, talking about the Eastern Conference is pretty bad, it's a two-man race and we're not holding our end of the bargain," James said. "So it was special to get this win."

Kyrie Irving had 31 points and 14 assists and was voted the MVP. Carmelo Anthony made a record eight three-pointers and scored 30 points, and the East stopped a three-game losing streak with a 163-155 victory over the West on Sunday night in the highest-scoring All-Star game ever.

"We took this one personal a bit," Irving said.

James had a steal and dunk on the first possession, long before defense usually shows up in the All-Star game.

"We wanted this win," James said. "They beat us the last three years and they had a lot of bragging rights, so to be able to come through being down 18 was huge."

Kevin Durant and Blake Griffin each finished with 38 points, four shy of Wilt Chamberlain's All-Star game record, for the West. But the East scored the final 10 points to pull out a game it trailed by 18.

"They started making shots and we didn't get stops and we went a little bit cold," said Griffin, who shot 19 of 23, setting a record for field goals made.

Irving scored 15 points in the fourth quarter. James had 22 points, seven rebounds and seven assists.

The 318 points broke the record of 303 set in 1987.



BILL HABER/AP

Above, the East's Kyrie Irving, of the Cleveland Cavaliers, holds the All-Star MVP trophy after Sunday's NBA All-Star game in New Orleans. Miami's LeBron James, right, had 22 points, seven rebounds, and seven assists in the East's 163-155 victory in the highest-scoring All-Star game ever.

Both teams played extremely well, we just lost.'

Kevin Durant
OKC forward; Western Conference All-Star

Durant finished with 10 rebounds and six assists, but the West was shut out after his three-pointer gave it a 155-153 lead with 1:59 left. Indiana's Paul George made



three free throws, Anthony nailed his final three-pointer, and James scored to make it 161-155. George closed it out with two more free throws and finished with 18 points.

"Both teams played extremely well, we just lost," Durant said.

The game that usually doesn't get tight until the final minutes was close throughout the fourth quarter, neither team leading by more than four until the final minute.

Chris Paul had 11 points and 13 assists, and first-time All-Star Stephen Curry had 12 points and 11 assists for the West. But the best point guard on the floor was Irving, who shot 14 of 17 and helped the East ring up 87 points in the second half after it surrendered a record 89 in the first.

In a colorful tribute to New Orleans, players wore sneakers and socks that ranged from green and blue to orange and purple, making the game look like a Mardi Gras parade.

The parade was one of layups and dunks for the West, which scored 44 points in the first quarter and 45 in the second. Griffin had 18 points in the first quarter and Durant had 22 at halftime, both two shy of records set by Glen Rice in 1997.

The East finished with 61 percent shooting, needing all sorts of offense after it simply couldn't defend Durant and Griffin.

Durant made six three-pointers and raised his career scoring average in the All-Star games to a record 30.6 points.



GERALD HERBERT/AP

The West's Blake Griffin, of the Los Angeles Clippers, set a new All-Star record for field goals made Sunday, going 19 of 23 from the field and scoring 38 points.

HIGH SCHOOL: DODDS-EUROPE BASKETBALL

D-I boys field has multiple contenders

By GREGORY BROOME

Stars and Stripes

The DODDS Europe boys basketball tournament runs Wednesday through Saturday at sites around Wiesbaden. Here's a look at the contenders in all three divisions:

Division I

The D-I field offers a clear choice between four different types of contenders.

First is the defending champion, Patch. The Panthers finished off a surprise run to the title a year ago behind the stellar play of Brendan Jones and John Robinson, two wings with almost unfairly complementary skill sets. The element of surprise is lost, but the sharpshooting Jones and slashing Robinson still comprise arguably the best two-man act in DODDS-Europe hoops.

Next is the season-long frontrunner, Wiesbaden. The Warriors are unequivocally stacked with talent, boasting a deep rotation of athletes that produces a new star on a nightly basis, a list that merely starts with do-everything wing Kelsey Thomas and frontcourt presence Tyler Cordoni.

But Wiesbaden's shiny season was tarnished Friday by its first loss, a 66-62 setback to Kaiserslautern.

That win might just be a hint of what Kaiserslautern is capable of. The Raiders have the look of last year's Patch squad, a consistent fringe contender threatening to finally assemble its many pieces. The Raiders boast perhaps the best starting five in D-I featuring frontcourt ace Emilio Moreno and dynamic guard Lorenzo Williams.

Finally, Ramstein has struggled through an uncharacteristically difficult season.

The Royals have lost four Division I games, including a frustrating streak of three straight that ended just two weeks ago. But Ramstein packs the most formidable frontcourt in the division in Jesse Gray and Drew Tevebaugh, and the Royals shouldn't be overlooked in the postseason.

Lakenheath, Vilseck and International School of Brussels have each had their moments this season. With some timely hoops and some favorable bounces, one of those teams might emerge as the bracket's fifth type of contender: the underdog.

Division II

It's hard to imagine that SHAPE and Vicenza play in the same league. What's clear, however, is that nobody has been playing in theirs.

SHAPE is a NATO command center near Belgium's border with France. Vicenza is an army garrison just south of the Italian Alps. The teams' gyms are separated by about 700 miles.

The schools not only don't play each other, they don't even play the same opponents. SHAPE has stayed confined to the Benelux and United Kingdom, while Vicenza's schedule is all-Italy.

What unites the schools is an affiliation with DODDS Europe and a comparable student population, placing both in Division II. And this season, the schools have shared another trait: excellence.

The Spartans have torn through their 10-game schedule unbeaten, registering wins over solid Division I opposition in ISB and Lakenheath. The Cougars have feasted on their regional rivals, winning all 10 of their



KENT HARRIS/Stars and Stripes

Vicenza's Mario Molina is part of a deep rotation that helped the Cougars go unbeaten in DODDS play in Italy this season. Both Vicenza and SHAPE are unbeaten and are favorites in the Division II tournament.

games by double-digit margins.

Each team is spearheaded by a high-scoring guard, namely SHAPE's Conner Manning and Vicenza's LaScott Richardson, paired with a capable frontcourt anchor in Spartan Armond Griebel and Cougar Derrick Schaefer.

As is always the case with DODDS Europe most crowded division, however, the competition will be thick.

Former dormat Hohenfels has been the surprise of the division, winning its first six games of the year and falling only to Division I foes Vilseck and Patch. The Tigers haven't played either SHAPE or Vicenza, raising the possibility that their turnaround story could play out all the way to the final day of the tournament.

Division III

There are a few more losses and a lot

less students involved, but in some ways, the Division III race between Brussels and Sigonella mirrors the parallel-universe struggle between SHAPE and Vicenza.

As in Division II, the top two contenders hail from Belgium and Italy. But the Brigands and Jaguars made their name not with undefeated seasons — in fact, neither team finished the regular season over .500 — but with notable upsets.

Brussels registered wins over the Division II likes of Alconbury and AFNORTH; Sigonella shocked larger neighbors Aviano and Naples.

Incirlik is probably the strongest candidate to disrupt that projected Brigand-Jaguar final. The mysterious Hodjars have played well in their Turkish circles and could mount a title run.

broome.gregory@starsandstripes.com
Twitter: @broomestripes

No clear favorites in girls fields

By GREGORY BROOME

Stars and Stripes

The DODDS Europe girls basketball tournament runs Wednesday through Saturday at sites around Wiesbaden, Germany. Here's a look at each division's contenders.

Division I

Regular-season records don't matter once the postseason arrives. That's fortunate, because the regular-season records belong to the Division I contenders aren't very helpful anyway.

Start with this week's home team, Wiesbaden. It's 10-2 and fields a dangerous lineup featuring sharpshooter Crisheena Rock and versatile forward Cierra Martin. The Warriors, however, are far from invincible. They lost to Ramstein and will come into the tournament off a loss to Kaiserslautern.

So is Ramstein the team to beat, then? Not quite. High-scoring ace Lindsey Breton and rebounding machine Katherine Enyeart headline a well-constructed starting five, but the Royals carry three losses, including their other meeting with Wiesbaden as well as Lakenheath

and Kaiserslautern.

What about Kaiserslautern? The Red Raiders bring a lot of talent back from last year's European championship squad, including prolific guard Alana Dickerson and reigning Stars and Stripes girls basketball Athlete of the Year Johanna Quinn. But they've lost to both Ramstein and Wiesbaden and sometimes struggle to score, having yet to post 50 points in a game this season.

Lakenheath, helmed by new coach John Mintzenzyer and featuring a dominant frontcourt led by Jourdan Hodge, narrowly missed a championship-game appearance last year and scored a six-point win against Ramstein in December. But the Lancers have been inconsistent, losing their other game against Ramstein, losing two straight January games to local non-DODDS opponents and splitting a pair of games against Division II SHAPE.

All of these exchanges of wins and losses leave the Division I picture thoroughly muddled entering the tournament. The only safe prediction, it seems, is for an unpredictable tournament.

Division II

The guesswork doesn't get any

easier at the Division II level.

DODDS-Europe's largest division is headlined by an undefeated team in Naples. The Italian front-runners certainly have the personnel to make a title run: Shanice Alexander is a double-double waiting to happen in the frontcourt, and Keylee Soto is a valuable steady hand on the perimeter.

The news isn't all good, however. A closer look at Naples' schedule reveals that the Wildcats' margin for error is whicker-thin: their wins included a two-point decision over Vicenza and a one-point victory over Aviano.

Those regional rivals are anxious for rematches. Aviano features a deep, versatile lineup led by Jasmyn Green and Jasmine Cole; Vicenza's Emma Knapp can fill a stat sheet like few others.

Casting further uncertainty on Naples' title hopes is the fact that the Wildcats, like most teams competing under DODDS-Europe's increasingly strict travel policy, are untested beyond the borders of their region. It's impossible to forecast which team might present an unsolvable matchup problem.

Candidates are lining up to try on that role for size. SHAPE, led by stalwart point guard Gina Rhett, enters the postseason on

a wave of positivity after splitting games with solid Division I program Lakenheath on Feb. 8 and spending the season's final weekend avenging earlier losses to Brussels and AFNORTH.

Despite that loss, AFNORTH remains a viable title contender, sporting a deep roster of contributors including Erica Balkum, Rachel Pagio and Grace Phillips.

Division III

As a general rule, no teams are more relieved to see the European tournament than those small schools assigned to Division III.

This year, however, the Division III teams weren't willing to wait to start winning.

Pitted against predominantly higher-division opposition, defending Division III champion Brussels nonetheless survived its schedule with a 7-3 record, handing out losses to Division II teams like AFNORTH, Alconbury and SHAPE along the way. The Brigands, led by star guard Ali DeFazio and the formidable frontcourt duo of Ana-Marija Vasileva and Teodora Vasileva, also took the time to put down a Division III rival, holding Menwith Hill to single-digit scoring efforts in each of two Brussels victories.



MICHAEL ABRAMS/Stars and Stripes

Ramstein's Katherine Enyeart and Wiesbaden's Cierra Martin will likely play key roles for their teams in this week's tournament.

That likely leaves Sigonella as the biggest obstacle separating Brussels from a repeat. The Jaguars absorbed more blows from their own rugged upper-division schedule, but they have the tools to give Brussels a hard time. Past Sydney Moore in particular could prove problematic for the Brigands.

OLYMPICS

US speedskaters continue dismal Games

After eight events, nobody higher than seventh

By BETH HARRIS
The Associated Press

SOCHI, Russia — The prospect of a medal shutout at the Olympic speedskating oval for the first time since 1984 grew more real for the U.S. on Sunday, as no American women managed to come near the podium in the 1,500 meters.

Heather Richardson had the best showing in Sunday's race, skating her second-best time at sea level in 1 minute, 57.60 seconds to wind up seventh. Brittany Bowe ended up 14th and Jilleanne Rookard was 18th.

Meanwhile, the Dutch swept the medals in an event for the third time at Adler Arena, giving the skating-crazed nation 16 of 24 long-track speedskating medals so far at the Sochi Games.

As did the men a day earlier, the U.S.

women switched back to the skinsuits they wore during the World Cup season, ditching the new Mach 39 suits that were touted as the fastest in the world when the team received them on Jan. 1. Both versions are made by Under Armour.

The Americans didn't practice or race in the new suits until they arrived in Sochi. Although they first saw the suits after the U.S. trials last month, they didn't get them back again until the pre-Olympic training camp in Collabio, Italy, after individual tailoring had been completed.

"I think you guys are making more of a deal on the skinsuits than we are," U.S. coach Ryan Shimabukuro said. "The athletes have to go and compete no matter what. The suits that they raced in today, that's the suit Brittany broke the world record in, that's the suit that Heather won three out of the four World Cups this year."

Shani Davis said the skaters "absolutely" should have gotten the new suits before Jan. 1 so they could have tried them out in competition. The four-time Olympic medalist from Chicago finished eighth in the 1,000 and 11th in the 1,500, his two best events.

Shimabukuro acknowledged the delivery of the suits so close to the Olympics was "probably one of the things that we're going to look at after the season's over."

Bowe downplayed the suit controversy. "The coaching staff and Under Armour have put in a lot of hours trying to figure out what to do," she said. "Nobody knows what it is. It could be this, it could be that. That's just one factor to try to eliminate and you saw the results today. We gave it our best shot."

Bowe, of Ocala, Fla., had no interest in comparing how she felt wearing the old suit and the new suit.

"I'm not the brains behind the construction of the skinsuits," she said. "I just put on what I'm given."

Tension has clearly been running high in the U.S. camp, with some of the skaters carefully choosing their words when talking about the suits.

On Saturday, media were limited to five questions about the suits. On Sunday, Bowe was hustled away from U.S. reporters after a few minutes. That led to a surreal scene in the mixed zone at the oval, with report-



DAVID J. PHILLIP/AP

American Brittany Bowe sits with coach Ryan Shimabukuro after the women's 1,500-meter speedskating race Sunday in Sochi, Russia. Bowe finished 14th in the race, continuing a poor showing by the U.S. in speedskating, where they've won no medals.

ers accusing the team's spokeswoman of cutting Bowe off.

Richardson, of High Point, N.C., tried to be upbeat after the 1,500. She had the same seventh-place finish in the 1,000 and was eighth in the 500.

"Today was actually pretty good. I can't complain at all," she said. "I was so much more relaxed than I've been at any point during this competition."

Richardson has been the best U.S. woman in Sochi, with three top-10 finishes. Bowe was eighth in the 1,000 and 13th in the 500. Rookard, of Woodhaven, Mich., was 10th in the 3,000 in her only other individual event.

Brian Hansen of Glenview, Ill., had a pair of top-10 finishes on the men's side: seventh in the 1,500 and ninth in the 1,000.

Four years ago in Vancouver, U.S. speedskaters won four medals, all on the men's side. The women are headed toward getting blanketed for the third straight Olympics, not having won any medals since taking three at the 2002 Salt Lake City Games.

"We're not going to do a full analysis.

It's too emotional. It's too in-the-moment," Shimabukuro said. "To do a specific analysis, you got to do it with a clear head and an open heart. Now is not the time."

Shimabukuro said the way to try to change the team's sinking momentum was to stay consistent in its preparation.

"The worst thing you can do is all of a sudden start throwing darts," he said. "You want to make sure you stick with the recipe that has gotten them to where they were and where they want to be. It could just be the perfect storm right now that's going the other way for us."

Even before the suit debacle, the U.S. had little chance of contending for medals in the last two individual events: the women's 10,000 and women's 5,000.

With no American finishing higher than seventh so far, it's hard to see how the U.S. could put together a medal contender in either the men's or women's team pursuit.

The U.S. has been shut out in Olympic speedskating twice, most recently in 1984.

"When we fall short, it's very tough," Shimabukuro said.



MATT DUNHAM/AP

Heather Richardson reacts after finishing seventh in the women's 1,500-meter race Sochi, Russia. It was the best showing by an American in the event, one day after the team switched back to its old skinsuits for the Games.

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OLYMPICS



VADIM GHIRDA/AP

Meryl Davis and Charlie White of the United States compete in the ice dance free dance figure skating finals on Monday in Sochi, Russia. The Americans won the gold medal.

Figure skating

Davis-White win ice dancing gold

Pair is first from US to take title in the event

By RACHEL COHEN
The Associated Press

SOCHI, Russia — Meryl Davis and Charlie White won the gold medal in ice dance Monday, the first Olympic title in the event for the United States.

Tessa Virtue and Scott Moir of Canada, the 2010 champions, took silver. Russia's Elena Ilinykh and Nikita Katsalapov captured bronze.

Davis and White won silver in Vancouver, but in the four years since have overtaken the Canadians, their training partners in Detroit.

The Americans scored 116.63 points in the free dance to finish with 195.52, 4.53 ahead of Virtue and Moir.

Davis and White started skating together in 1997, and on the biggest day of their career, they were nearly flawless. When the music from "Sheherazade" ended with White on a knee, Davis rested her head on White's back in an exhausted elation.

"That in itself justified 17 years of hard work," White said of their performance.

As the music swells over the

final minute of the program, their feet are in nonstop motion yet every movement is intricately choreographed. Their lifts are a blur as White spins across the ice with Davis held aloft.

They now have one medal of each color after winning bronze in the new team event in Sochi.

Virtue and Moir became the first North Americans to win Olympic ice dance gold at their home Olympics in Vancouver. Their free dance to Russian classical music Monday told the story of their partnership, which also stretches back to 1997.

In a performance at times tender and others triumphant, Moir kisses her hand at the start and several times throughout the program.

Ilinykh and Katsalapov were just ninth at last year's world championships but are now the latest Olympic ice dance medalists from Russia. She's only 19; he's 22. The home fans start cheering when the first few notes are played from "Swan Lake" in their free dance.

Russia's Nathalie Pechalat and Fabian Bourzat were fourth.

Scoreboard

Medals count

At Sochi, Russia
(3 of 5 events, Monday)
(2 of 6 events)

Nation	G	S	B	Tot
United States	5	3	2	10
Russia	5	7	6	18
Netherlands	5	3	3	11
Norway	5	3	3	11
Canada	4	7	4	15
Germany	2	5	2	9
Sweden	2	5	2	9
Switzerland	2	4	1	7
Austria	2	4	1	7
France	2	4	0	6
Belarus	4	0	1	5
China	3	2	0	5
Czech Republic	1	3	1	5
Japan	1	3	1	5
Slovenia	0	2	3	5
Italy	0	2	3	5

Figure skating

Monday
At Sochi, Russia

Ice Dancing
Final Ranking

1. Meryl Davis, West Bloomfield, Mich., and Charlie White, Bloomfield Hills and Mich. (1, 78.89; 1, 116.63), 195.52.
2. Tessa Virtue and Scott Moir, Canada (2, 76.35; 2, 114.66), 191.01.
3. Elena Ilinykh and Nikita Katsalapov, Russia (3, 73.04; 3, 110.40), 183.48.
4. Nathalie Pechalat and Fabian Bourzat, France (4, 72.78; 4, 104.44), 177.22.
5. Ekaterina Bobrova and Dmitri Soloviev, Russia (5, 69.97; 6, 102.95), 172.92.
6. Anna Cappellini and Luca Lanotte, Italy (6, 67.58; 7, 101.92), 169.50.
7. Kaitlyn Weaver and Andrew Poje, Canada (7, 65.93; 5, 103.18), 169.11.
8. Madison Chock, Redondo Beach, Calif., and Evan Bates, Ann Arbor, Mich. (8, 65.46; 8, 99.18), 164.64.
9. Maia and Alex Shibutani, Ann Arbor, Mich. (9, 64.47; 10, 90.70), 155.17.

Bobsled

Monday
At Krasnaya Polyana, Russia

Men's Two-man
Final

1. Russia 1 (Alexander Zubkov, Alexey Voeyvod), 3:45.39.
2. Switzerland 1 (Beat Hefti, Alex Baumann), 3:46.05.
3. United States 1 (Steven Holcomb, Park City, Utah, Steve Langton, Melrose, Mass.), 3:46.27.
4. Russia 2 (Alexander Kasjanov, Maxim Belugin), 3:46.30.
5. Latvia 1 (Oskars Melbardis, Daugmanis Driksens), 3:46.48.
6. Canada 3 (Justin Kripps, Bryan Barnett), 3:46.62.
7. Canada 2 (Chris Spring, Jesse Lumsden), 3:46.79.
8. Germany 3 (Francesco Friedrich, Jannis Becker), 3:46.85.
12. United States 2 (Cory Butler, Yuciga, Calif., Chris Fogt, Alpine, Utah), 3:47.19.
13. United States 3 (Nick Cunningham, Monterey, Calif., Dallas Robinson, Georgetown, Ky.), 3:47.69.

Biathlon

Monday
At Krasnaya Polyana, Russia

Women's 12.5km (Mass Start)
(Penalties in parentheses)

1. Darya Domracheva, Belarus, 35:25.6 (1).
2. Gabriela Soukalova, Czech Republic, 35:48.1 (1).
3. Tatjana Eckhoff, Norway, 35:52.9 (1).
4. Evi Sachenbacher-Stehle, Germany, 35:53.0 (0).
5. Teja Gregorin, Slovenia, 36:05.0 (0).
6. Monika Hojnisz, Poland, 36:20.5 (0).
7. Kaisa Mäkeläinen, Finland, 36:27.1 (2).
8. Olena Pidhruska, Ukraine, 36:37.1 (0).

U.S. Finisher

12. Susan Dunklee, Barton, Vt., 36:57.9 (3).

Men's hockey

Preliminary Round
Group A

	Group A						
	W	L	OTW	OTL	Pts	GF	GA
United States	2	0	1	0	8	15	4
Russia	1	0	1	1	6	8	5
Slovenia	1	2	0	0	3	6	11

Group B

	W	L	OTW	OTL	Pts	GF	GA
Canada	2	0	1	0	8	11	2
Finland	2	0	0	1	7	15	7
Austria	1	2	0	0	3	7	15
Norway	0	3	0	0	0	3	12

Group C

Sweden	3	0	0	0	9	10	5
Switzerland	2	1	0	0	6	2	1
Czech Republic	1	2	0	0	3	6	7
Latvia	0	3	0	0	0	5	10

Wednesday, Feb. 12

Wednesday, Feb. 12

Sweden 4, Czech Republic 2	Switzerland 1, Latvia 0
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Thursday, Feb. 13

Finland 8, Austria 4	Russia 5, Slovenia 2
United States 7, Slovakia 1	Canada 3, Norway 4

Friday, Feb. 14

Czech Republic 4, Latvia 0	Sweden 1, Switzerland 0
Canada 6, Austria 0	Finland 6, Norway 1

Saturday, Feb. 15

Slovenia 5, Slovakia 1	United States 3, Russia 2
Switzerland 1, Czech Republic 0	Sweden 5, Latvia 3

Sunday, Feb. 16

Austria 3, Norway 1	Russia 1, Slovakia 0
Slovenia 5, Switzerland 5	Slovakia 1, OT
Canada 2, Finland 1	OT

Tuesday, Feb. 18

Qualification Playoff Round	
Slovenia vs. Austria	Russia vs. Norway
Czech Republic vs. Slovakia	Switzerland vs. Latvia

Wednesday, Feb. 19

Sweden vs. Slovenia-Austria winner	Finland vs. Russia-Norway winner
Canada vs. Switzerland-Latvia winner	United States vs. Czech Republic-Slovakia

Women's hockey

Preliminary Round
Group A

Japan	0	3	0	0	1	7
Wednesday, Feb. 12						
Finland 4, Switzerland 3, OT						
Canada 3, United States 2						
Thursday, Feb. 13						

Group B

Saturday, Feb. 15
Quarterfinals
 Sweden 4, Finland 2
 Switzerland 2, Russia 0

Sunday, Feb. 16

Wednesday, Feb. 12

Finland 4, Switzerland 3	OT
United States 2, Russia 0	

Thursday, Feb. 13

Germany 4, Japan 0	Russia 3, Sweden 1
--------------------	--------------------

Friday, Feb. 14

Sweden 4, Finland 2	Switzerland 2, Russia 0
---------------------	-------------------------

Saturday, Feb. 15

Canada 5, Japan 3	United States 4, Germany 1
-------------------	----------------------------

Sunday, Feb. 16

United States 5, Switzerland 2	Canada 5, Sweden 1
--------------------------------	--------------------

Monday, Feb. 17

Canada 5, Russia 5	Sweden 4, Japan 4
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Tuesday, Feb. 18

Finland 5, Russia 2	Sweden 5, Switzerland 1
---------------------	-------------------------

Wednesday, Feb. 19

Sweden vs. Canada-Switzerland loser	Gold Medal
United States vs. Canada-Switzerland winner	

Curling

Men

Country	W-L
Sweden	7-2
Canada	7-2
China	1-3
Norway	5-4
Britain	5-4
Denmark	4-5
Russia	3-6
Switzerland	2-7
United States	1-8
Germany	

Thursday, Feb. 13

Russia 7, Switzerland 6	Canada 7, Denmark 6
Sweden 5, Norway 4	Sweden 5, United States 3

Friday, Feb. 14

Sweden 6, China 5	United States 8, Germany 5
Canada 10, Norway 4	Britain 5, Denmark 6
Russia 7, United States 6	China 7, Norway 5
Germany 8, Switzerland 7	Sweden 8, Germany 4

Saturday, Feb. 15

Switzerland 9, Denmark 3	Canada 7, Britain 5
China 9, Russia 6	

Sunday, Feb. 16

Canada 8, United States 6	Norway 7, Britain 5
Sweden 8, Russia 4	Norway 5, Switzerland 3
Canada 9, China 8	Denmark 6, Germany 3
Sweden 5, Norway 3	

Monday, Feb. 17

China 6, Britain 5	Russia 5, Germany 7
Switzerland 6, United States 3	Denmark 5, Norway 3

Tuesday, Feb. 18

Norway vs. Britain, 5 a.m.	
Wednesday, Feb. 19	
Sweden vs. Norway-Britain winner	Women

Women

Country	W-L
Canada	9-0
Sweden	7-2
Switzerland	6-4
China	5-4
Japan	4-5
Denmark	3-6
South Korea	3-6
Russia	1-8

Thursday, Feb. 13

Canada 8, Denmark 5	Britain 8, China 7
Sweden 9, Switzerland 8	Sweden 7, Denmark 6
Canada 8, Russia 4	Canada 8, Switzerland 5
United States 8, Japan 6	

Friday, Feb. 14

China 11, South Korea 3	China 7, Sweden 6
Denmark 7, United States 6	Sweden 7, United States 6
Canada 8, Switzerland 3	Denmark 8, Britain 6

Saturday, Feb. 15

Canada 8, Japan 6	China 7, Sweden 6
Denmark 7, United States 6	Sweden 7, United States 6
Canada 8, Switzerland 3	Denmark 8, Britain 6

Sunday, Feb. 16

Denmark 7, South Korea 4	Japan 9, Russia 4
Sweden 5, Switzerland 4	Canada 7, United States 6

Monday, Feb. 17

Britain 8, Russia 5	South Korea 11, United States 2
China 8, China 5	Switzerland 10, China 6
Denmark 8, Britain 7	Denmark 9, South Korea 4
Sweden 8, Japan 4	

Tuesday, Feb. 18

Canada vs. Britain	
Sweden vs. Switzerland	



PETR DAVID JOSEK/AP

Evelina Raselli of Switzerland and Catherine Ward of Canada mix it up during the second period of the women's hockey semifinal game on Monday in Sochi, Russia.

OLYMPICS

Women's hockey

Americans coast in semifinal against Sweden

BY JIMMY GOLEN
The Associated Press

SOCHI, Russia — The work began before the U.S. women's hockey team reached the medal round, before it arrived in Sochi, before the roster was selected.

Four years ago, the Americans left the Olympics with a silver medal. And Julie Chu was determined to be back.

"When that buzzer goes off and it erupted in the arena and we felt short of our goal of being the best in the world, that hurts," the four-time Olympian said after the United States beat Sweden 6-1 on Monday to reach the gold medal game in Sochi. "The last four years, that's been our goal."

Megan Bozek, Kendall Coyne and Brianna Decker each had a goal and two assists, and the Americans outshot Sweden 70-9 to clinch no worse than a silver medal. The U.S. has medaled in every Winter Games since women's hockey was added in 1998, and just once — with a loss to Sweden in the 2006 semifinals — failed to reach the Olympic championship game.

Canada, a three-time defending champion that has played in every Olympic final, would have a chance for a fourth gold in a row with a victory over Switzerland later Monday. Not since the inaugural tournament in Nagano have



PETER DAVID JOSEK/AP

United States captain Meghan Duggan and Jenni Asserholt of Sweden battle for control of the puck during the first period of their women's semifinal game at Shayba Arena on Monday in Sochi, Russia. The U.S. won 6-1 to advance to the gold medal game against Canada or Switzerland.

the Americans beaten Canada, losing in the championship game in 2002 and '10 and again in the preliminary round of the Sochi Games on Wednesday.

There are 11 players on the U.S. roster who played in the final in Vancouver, but Chu is the only one who was also on the team in Salt Lake City or Turin. She has

two silver medals and a bronze.

"We're going for a different color this time," she said.

And coach Katey Stone would like to see her get it.

"It's about time isn't it? It's time," said Stone, who was also Chu's coach at Harvard. "Julie's been everything to the program, she's been a youngster, she's been a veteran — she's been a mother to the younger kids. Kids like that don't come around all the time. She's a special one. I certainly hope she gets what she wants."

In goal, Jesse Vetter needed just eight saves for the victory.

The U.S. scored five times in 47 shots on starting goalie Valentina Wallner before she was replaced in the second period by Kim Martin Hasson. The backup was the winning goaltender when Sweden upset the Americans in Turin, and she stopped 22 of 35 shots.

"We took Valentina out because she had a busy day at work," said assistant coach Leif Boork, whose team will face the Switzerland-Canada loser for third place. "We wanted to make a decision for the next game, the bronze medal game."

Anna Borgqvist scored on a deflected shot past Vetter with just under seven minutes remaining to spoil the shutout.

Alex Carpenter and Kacey Bellamy scored in a span of 66 seconds in the first period, and Amanda Kessel gave the Americans a 3-0 lead before Sweden got off its first shot. The U.S. outshot Sweden 29-1 in the first period.

US has much work to do to straighten out curling

BY STEVE DOUGLAS
The Associated Press

SOCHI, Russia — American curler Ann Swisshelm blew her nose in a tissue, wiped away some of her tears and stared down a sheet of ice for the final time in her career at the highest level of her sport.

At the end of the sheet was an electronic scoreboard. It read: South Korea 11, USA 2.

If that made for bleak reading for Swisshelm and curling fans all over the United States, they should avoid looking at the overall women's standings.

The U.S. women's team finished the Olympic curling tournament Monday in last place for a second-straight Winter Games, this time with just one win in nine games. The U.S. men's team didn't fare much better, finishing next to last at 2-7.

"I just wish I could start all over again," said U.S. player Debbie McCormick, who was the team's skip in 2010.

Understandably, back-to-back Olympic failures are leading to questions about the structure of curling in the U.S.

At present, U.S. teams are self-formed and made up of players who balance curling with their full-time jobs. U.S. skip Erika Brown, 41, is a mother of two and a physician's assistant who fits in

practice during her lunch break. Teammate Jessica Schultz, 29, is a physical therapist's assistant.

Their team must compete against other teams made up of part-time curlers at the U.S. Olympic trials to reach the Games.

Most rival nations tend to cherry-pick the best players for one elite team, which receives all the funding from that country. Britain, for example, lavished \$5 million pounds (\$8.4 million) on its top curlers in the last Olympic cycle. Russia and China have similar elite teams.

Will the U.S. have to go this way to stay competitive?

"I'm not in support of that," Brown said. "Just because, as somebody who has been in this game for so long, it's about the team and about relationships you develop."

"As much as it's an Olympic business these days, you're still in a pretty small, intimate team. I think there's enough top curlers in the U.S. that you can continue generating good competition."

Swisshelm said she wouldn't wish a such a system on anyone, in part because there is no professional tour or a way for a full-time curler to make a living in the game once their Olympic career is done.

"But if an organization goes to cherry-picking athletes and you have a mistimed injury, you have

no education, no job skills," Swisshelm said. "What do you do?"

USA Curling accepts that changes need to be made to give the American teams a chance of winning gold. But Rick Patzke, chief operating officer of USA Curling, doesn't foresee a time — at least in the near future — where the U.S. has a single elite team.

"I think you need to bring more than just four people up," he said. "I think you need to have a program that funnels the right people to the top."

"We have always tried to embrace the traditions and culture of the sport but, on the flip side, if we aren't in the Olympics, how much interest are we losing? I think there has to be an understanding in the organization: Are we all in, in pursuit of medals? Or do we just have one foot in? There'll be good discussions in the coming weeks."

Heading into the Olympics, the Americans were seen as long shots for a podium finish. Erika Brown's rink finished fourth in the world championship last year and all four members of the team had previous Olympic experience.

But there has been embarrassment in Sochi, including conceding an Olympic-record seven points in one end to Britain (12-3), Denmark (9-2) and South Korea.



MORRY GASH/AP

USA skip Erika Brown looks over the situation during Monday's match against Korea in Sochi, Russia. Korea won 11-2.

And heart-breaking losses: a 7-6 extra-end defeat to first-place Canada and a 7-6 defeat to second-place Sweden.

"You have the No. 1 golfer in the world in Tiger Woods and every now and then he misses the cut," Swisshelm said. "Nobody begrudges him an off week. Unfortunately for us, that off moment happened right here in the Olympics."

The 45-year-old Swisshelm, of Chicago, said the defeat to Korea was her last competitive game.

She doesn't know what's in store for her next. Brown, of Madison, Wis., said Sochi will likely be her last Olympics. McCormick, of Rio, Wis., will be 44 when the 2018 Games arrive in Pyeongchang.

The U.S. women's team is likely to have a very different look by then. They hope, too, for different results.

"We have to figure out how we elevate the best of the best in the U.S. to be the best of the best in the world," Patzke said, "because it's not happening right now."

OLYMPICS

Bobsled

American men take home bronze medal

By TIM REYNOLDS
The Associated Press

KRASNAYA POLYANA, Russia — Winless in the past three years in two-man bobsledding, Alexander Zubkov picked the perfect time and place to put that streak to an emphatic end.

At the Olympics. On home ice.

No one was even close, either. The 39-year-old Russian found magic in all four of his runs, teaming with Alexey Voevod to finish 0.66 seconds ahead of the Swiss team of Beat Hefti and brakeman Alex Baumann to win the gold medal at the Sochi Games.

And it was a night 62 years in the making for the United States, with the pairing of Steven Holcomb of Park City, Utah, and Steve Langton of Melrose, Mass., taking the bronze, winning the first two-man medal by an American sled since 1952.

It wasn't gold, but it was a medal savored by the Americans nonetheless. Holcomb wrapped U.S. coach Brian Shiner in a long embrace when he got out of his sled, as several teammates celebrated.

While the Americans finally didn't leave a two-man race empty-handed, this competition was all about the Russian, who apparently knows how to coax more speed out of this track than any other bobsledder in the world.

The fact that Zubkov was competitive was no surprise. The fact that he won, maybe a little surprising. To win by such a wide margin, that was stunning.

Zubkov's last victory in an international two-man race was at the 2011 world championships. He'd been 0-for-25 since, yet led this competition wire to wire, even though his two closest challengers have consistently been faster during the past three seasons.

Head-to-head against Zubkov in two-man races since the start of the 2011-12 World



DITA ALANGKARA/AP

The team from the United States USA-1, piloted by Steven Holcomb and brakeman Steven Langton, celebrate after their final run to win the bronze medal during the men's two-man bobsled competition at the 2014 Winter Olympics on Monday.

Cup season, Holcomb had been 13-9. Hefti had simply owned the Russian, going 19-2.

Over two damp and foggy nights at the Sanki Sliding Center, none of that

mattered.

"It's his home track," USA-3 pilot Nick Cunningham said of Zubkov. "You can never count out the hometown guy."

Zubkov's four-run time was 3 minutes, 45.39 seconds. Hefti finished in 3:46.05, and Holcomb was clocked in 3:46.27 — a mere 0.03 seconds ahead of another Russian sled that challenged for bronze.

Zubkov is the third-oldest pilot to win two-man gold and was dominant, just like every other gold medalist crowned so far at these Olympics. All seven medal competitions to date at the Sanki Sliding Center have been a blowout, with none decided by less than 0.76 seconds.

That's a massive gap in sports where hundredths and thousandths of seconds typically make the difference.

Germany, which had won the last three gold medals in two-man, had its top sled finish eighth, the worst showing for the sliding power in the event since 1956.

Holcomb and Langton gave the U.S. its fourth sliding medal so far at the Sochi Games, a total that exceeds the three the Americans combined to win in Turin in 2006 and Vancouver in 2010. With women's bobsled and four-man bobsled still remaining, and the Americans expected to vie for golds in both, the U.S. has to be thinking their total will grow before the Sochi cauldron is extinguished.

Ending 62-year droughts seems to be Holcomb's forte. He was the driver of USA-1 that ended a 62-year American gap between four-man gold medals at the Vancouver Games, and now the two-man drought is history as well.

"What Holcomb has done is unbelievable for the sport," Cunningham said. "He's put USA Bobsled on the international map."

Holcomb became the sixth American to win at least two medals in bobsledding. He'll have a chance at a third — which would tie Pat Martin for the most ever — this weekend in the four-man event.

"Holcy's the man," USA-2 pilot Cory Butner said, "and he proved it again."

Weather: Fog latest challenge for athletes after days of sunshine

FROM BACK PAGE

The ski jumping venue is at a lower altitude and was not shrouded in the thick fog. A training round for Nordic combined athletes was held without disruptions, and the ski jump team event was also expected to go ahead as scheduled on Monday.

The fog is causing a new challenge for the athletes following days of sunshine and unseasonably warm weather. At the Laura Cross Country Ski and Biathlon Center, the high temperatures toward the end of last week had softened the snow and led to some cross-country skiers cutting off the sleeves on their suits.

In biathlon, fog is an even bigger problem because it limits the visibility on the shooting range.

"You have to be able to hit the targets," said Jerry Kokesh, the editor of the International

Biathlon Union's official website, adding that the course becomes more dangerous as well. "Uphills are not a problem, but downhill are. ... That can be a serious safety concern."

The first week of the games went by without any major disruptions to the schedule before Sunday's biathlon race was postponed, despite concerns going into the Olympics about the warm climate in Sochi. IOC spokesman Mark Adams said every Winter Olympics normally faces some rescheduling because of the weather, and that Sochi has been relatively unaffected.

"In terms of what's going on there, I think it's actually quite ironic that the biggest issue we've had so far is due to winter fog," Adams said. "Winter sports is very unpredictable. It's a very dynamic field of play. At present, the conditions are good and we are continuing. We haven't had



CHRISTOPHE ENA/AP

The sun tries to break through the heavy fog on Monday as skiers take a chair lift up the mountain near the alpine skiing training slopes in Krasnaya Polyana, Russia.

any major complaints up there."

Certainly not from Holland, the snowboarder, who said it was better to wait another day than to compete in poor conditions.

"It's the Olympics, we want to have the best rider win and not have anything screwy," Holland said. "So we'll be back tomorrow and let her roll from there. It's

time to drop the hammer and the sickle on this course."

AP Sports Writers Will Graves, Jon Krawczynski, Andrew Damp and Pat Graham contributed to this report.

AUTO RACING



JOHN RAOUX/AP

Austin Dillon walks by his car in the garage area Sunday after he won the pole during qualifying for the Daytona 500 driving the famed No. 3 car.

Dillon drives famed No. 3 to Daytona pole

Childress allows grandson to use number in top series for first time since Earnhardt's death

By JENNA FRYER
The Associated Press

DAYTONA BEACH, Fla. — With the famed No. 3 on his car and memories of the late Dale Earnhardt fresh in his mind, Austin Dillon took the fabled number out of hibernation and straight to the top at Daytona.

Dillon reawakened the days of The Intimidator and proved he can handle the spotlight thrust on his ride in the 3, winning the pole Sunday for the season-opening Daytona 500.

He took the top spot with a lap at 196.019 mph in NASCAR's season opener in a car Richard Childress has refused to field at NASCAR's top level since Earnhardt's fatal accident on the last lap of the 2001 race.

But with his 23-year-old grandson ready for the Sprint Cup Series, Childress allowed Dillon to use the number widely associated with the seven-time champion. Earnhardt won 67 races, six championships and the 1998 Daytona 500 driving the No. 3.

Dillon was a kid when he posed for a picture with Earnhardt in Victory Lane following his breakthrough 1998 win.

He'll have many more memories from this milestone, like the

‘Everyone wants to see this number perform well, and that’s what my goals are.’

Austin Dillon
Sprint Cup driver

congratulatory handshake he received from Richard Petty when qualifying ended.

NASCAR's family roots run deep, so Childress never had to leave the family tree to find the right driver for the number.

Dillon has been using it in NASCAR national competition since 2009, when he made his Truck Series debut. He won the Truck championship in 2011 driving the No. 3 for Richard Childress Racing, and the Nationwide title last season in the same number.

So Childress knew — he always knew and has insisted that Earnhardt gave his blessing long before his death — that Dillon could use the number if he ever made it to Cup.

Dillon doesn't take the responsibility lightly.

"Everybody wants to see this number perform well, and that's what my goals are," Dillon said. "I love getting in that race car and driving it. I think once we get

through some of these races here at the beginning of the year, everything will sink in and I'll get comfortable and be able to have some fun."

It's the fourth time the No. 3 has won the pole for the Daytona 500. Buddy Baker did it in 1969, Ricky Rudd in 1983 and Earnhardt in 1996.

But this one was emotional all the way through RCR, which had its ups-and-downs in performance in the 13 years since Earnhardt's death. Now Dillon comes in at another changing of the guard, as Kevin Harvick, the driver who slid into Earnhardt's seat the week after his death, has moved to another team.

Engine builder Danny Lawrence, who made his debut with the company at the 1998 Daytona 500 with Earnhardt, said the company ran on adrenaline after Earnhardt's death. Dillon has now given the organization a shot in the arm.

"On the sentimental side, I was really pretty good about this 3 thing," Lawrence said. "But when I saw that car hit the race track today, it kind of tore me up a little bit. Austin is such a good guy, he has been great for our company."

Martin Truex Jr., driving a Chevrolet for Furniture Row Racing, qualified second with a lap at 195.852 mph. Truex's engine is built by Earnhardt-Childress Racing, giving the company a sweep of the Daytona 500 front row.

"Obviously without that thing under the hood, we wouldn't be where we are," said Truex, who won the Daytona 500 pole in 2009 with an ECR engine when he drove for Earnhardt-Ganassi Racing.

The rest of the field is set Thursday through a pair of qualifying races, but Childress and the ECR engines are strong: They had five cars in the top 12 on Sunday.

Childress knew he had a shot at the pole, if not with Dillon then from another one of his four Richard Childress Racing entries.

But it was Hendrick Motorsports driver Dale Earnhardt Jr., the first driver to make his qualifying attempt, who set the pace early and held down the provisional pole for most of the session. RCR drivers Brian Scott and Paul Menard failed to bump

Earnhardt, and it was surprisingly Ford driver Greg Biffle who finally did it as the 33rd driver to take his turn.

Ryan Newman then took his shot for RCR and missed, and Dillon was the next driver out. He and crew chief Gil Martin knew the spotlight was on the No. 3, and stayed focused on the task at hand, even as Childress seemed to be on pins and needles.

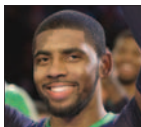
"You try to keep the blinders on," Dillon said of the pressure to win the pole. "For me, it was hitting those shifts, putting in a good line. The funny thing is, there is a build-up to it, and my grandfather, me and Gil said, 'Calm down, you're nervous!' He said, 'I'm not nervous. I'm concerned.'"

"So now he doesn't have to be concerned. We're on the pole, and things can be a little bit calm."

Childress celebrated by pumping his fist in the air. He won't be so reserved next week, admitting if Dillon pulls off a win, he'll celebrate in a far different way.

"The 3 is special to all of us; the family, the Earnhardt family, to every one of us," he said. "But I think it's special because Austin, our family is in the car. The emotion will fly if the 3 rolls in there on Sunday. I won't hold it back, I promise."

SPORTS



Bragging rights
Cavs' Irving named MVP as
East snaps All-Star skid | **Page 25**

WINTER OLYMPICS

Vision quest

Thick fog disrupts Monday's events in Sochi

By **MATTIAS KAREN**
The Associated Press

KRASNAYA POLYANA, Russia — Thick fog lingering over the mountains Monday caused the biggest weather disruptions of the Sochi Olympics so far, with a biathlon race and a snowboard event both postponed until Tuesday.

The fog rolled in over the mountains in Krasnaya Polyana on Sunday night and was still shrouding some of the Olympic skiing venues in a cloud-like mist by late Monday afternoon. That prompted organizers to call off the men's biathlon mass-start race and men's snowboardcross almost simultaneously.

The rescheduling didn't seem to be a major concern for the athletes, though.

"This is standard for snowboarding and ski events. Mother Nature doesn't always cooperate," American snowboardcross rider Nate Holland said.

The biathlon race had already been pushed back from Sunday evening to Monday morning, and was then postponed to mid-afternoon before being called off for another day. It will now be held Tuesday at 2:30 p.m., organizers said.

'This is standard for snowboarding and ski events. Mother Nature doesn't always cooperate.'

Nate Holland
American snowboardcross rider

Inside:

- Struggles continue for American speedskaters, **Page 27**
- Davis, White win first-ever ice dance gold for US, **Page 28**



"Well, I am going to sleep again," double Olympic champion Martin Fourcade tweeted in French after the race was postponed. "We'll see each other tomorrow!"

At the Rosa Khutor Extreme Park, the snowboardcross was also first delayed then postponed. Organizers first canceled the seeding runs for

the event, then pushed back the elimination races before calling it a day. The elimination races will now start at 10:30 a.m. Tuesday, with the seeding runs scrapped.

The Alpine schedule wasn't affected Monday, but the women's giant slalom on Tuesday was pushed forward by 90 minutes to avoid problems. Rain and snow is forecast to begin falling on Tuesday morning and continue through the afternoon. The first run will now begin at 9:30 a.m. and the second at 1 p.m.

Jessica Lindell-Vikarby of Sweden, one of the favorites in the GS, said it would have been impossible to have the event on Monday.

"When it's this thick you cannot race," Lindell-Vikarby said. "It has to be more open, for sure."

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Olympic workers sit down in heavy fog near the alpine skiing training slopes on Monday in Krasnaya Polyana, Russia.

CHRISTOPHE ENA/AP

McDermott passes Bird on D-I scoring list as Bluejays upset Villanova | **Page 24**

Competitive fields in DODDS Europe basketball tournaments | **Page 26**

